THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

Notes of Recent Exposition

ENGLISH-SPEAKING students of theology, if they do not know his work already, should make a note of the name of Oscar CULLMANN of Basel. It is becoming clear that as a theologian he deserves to rank with Barth, Brunner, and Bultmann with all of whom he is ever ready to break a dialectic lance. One or two of his smaller books have already been done into English, and now his major work, *Christus und die Zeit* [1946], has been translated for us by Professor Floyd V. Filson of Chicago under the title *Christ and Time*.[1] It is undoubtedly (as the translator claims) 'one of the most significant theological works that Europe has produced within the last decade.'

What is its thesis? The metaphysical problem of the relation between time and eternity is ever with us, and likely to remain so. It is not this high speculative problem that CULLMANN would solve for curious mortals. His purpose is more modest—to set forth the New Testament conception of time and history. This he does with great ability. He finds it to be *a line*—a Christ-line. But this is to anticipate.

'The years A.D. 1–30,' says Karl Barth, 'are the era of revelation and disclosure.' Now, if we take the idea of revelation seriously, as following Barth we are all doing nowadays, sooner or later we shall have to think out the whole time-process in terms of God's revelatory Act in Christ. We (and that means Communists as well as Christians) divide all history into two periods—B.C. and A.D. Is there not deep significance here? Does it not call for the writing of a Christian theology of history? Yes, answers CULLMANN, and gives us this book.

What does the Christian believer do with history? He takes a particular bit of it—A.D. 1–30—and, to the 'scandalizing' of the secular historian, makes it the criterion of all history. Nor has he any option, if he takes the New Testament seriously. This is how CULLMANN begins. He then goes on to discuss the 'once-for-all-ness' of God's redemptive Act in Christ; passes to show the relation between this 'sacred history' and general history; and ends by applying the redemption wrought in Christ to the individual man. *En route*, he lets fall many interesting little bits of exegesis (for example, his eucharistic explanation of *Maranatha* and his discussion of 'this rock' in Mt 16^{18}) and gives us two clever diagrams to illustrate the Jewish and the Christian conceptions of history and Christ's Lordship over the Church and the world.

[1] S.C.M.; 18s. net.

The kernel of the book is its thesis that for the Christian time and history find their centre-point in Christ. Contrast the Greek view. For the Greek, time is a circle—a cyclic process that really gets nowhere—and redemption must be some kind of escape from it. It is far otherwise with the Christian. Like the Jew, he believes in Divine action in time; he conceives of time as linear; and he views eternity, not as timelessness but as —endless time.

If then we are to think of time as the early Christians did, we must reject all Platonizing distinctions between time and eternity, and think of it as progress on a rising line. The series of events (or *kairoi*, *i.e.*, special points of time in relation to God's purpose) which this rising line symbolizes is controlled by the living God, who is Lord of history. And this time-line has three sections: time before the Creation; time between the Creation and the Consummation; and time after the Consummation.

Where then lies the mid-point? For the Jew (who also thinks of time as linear) the centre of history lies in the future—at the Consummation, when God will send His Messiah and usher in the new era. For the Christian, however, the centre-point lies not in the future, but in the past—in what may be called 'the Christ Event.' All that goes before that Event leads up to it and prepares for it; all that follows derives from it and is illuminated by it. For the Christian, the 'once-for-all' Event (the atoning Death and Resurrection of Christ) is past; the decisive battle has been fought and won—

> Sing, my tongue, how glorious
> Glorious victory became.

But though D-Day is over, mopping-up operations remain, and Victory Day is still to come. When

it will come, God in His omniscience alone knows; and till it comes there will be tension. For the present, Christ reigns ('Jesus is Lord,' ran the early Christian confession of faith), the unseen Lord of both the Church and the world (though the world knows it not); but His is a hidden Lordship, and there is tension in the Church which is His Body on earth, a tension never to be relaxed till the gospel is preached to all nations (preached, but not necessarily accepted), and the End comes.

What of the individual in all this? By faith in Christ's past saving work he is united to his Lord. In the present, he is bound to his reigning Lord who sets him to work in His Church, and gives him the Spirit which is the 'earnest' of his full redemption. As for the future, he looks for the Second Advent of Christ and the Resurrection when God will give him 'a spiritual body' like that of his glorified Lord.

We hope this bald summary will give the reader a true impression of CULLMANN's provocative and stimulating book. It will leave him asking questions. Some of them will be about little points of exegesis: for example, is CULLMANN right in holding that 'the restraining power' in 2 Thessalonians is 'the missionary preaching,' that 'the white horse' in Rev 6 is the gospel herald, and that 'the authorities' in Ro 13[1] signify 'the angelic powers?' Others will be about bigger issues: Has CULLMANN said the last word about the relation between time and eternity in the New Testament? Are we justified, with the Synoptic Gospels before us, in drawing a distinction between the Kingdom of Christ which exists presently and a Kingdom of God which (according to CULLMANN) only comes at the consummation? And, when the Roman Church has instructed its members that belief in a visible Return of Christ to earth, 'can no longer be taught as certain,' are we Protestant Christians compelled by the New Testament (and the Synoptic teaching of our Lord in particular) to belief in it?

The Rev. Leonard HODGSON, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford, has published seven lectures that he gave in substantially the same form for eleven years, while he was Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, as a course open to all members of the University and included in its official lecture list—*Christian Faith and Practice*.[1]

In these seven lectures he attempts, as he says, to give a synoptic view of what Christianity is. Sometimes in the course of them he uses passages that are also to be found in his larger works on the Trinity and the Atonement. The grounds on which he does so are stated in terms worth quoting and that should bring comfort to many a preacher: 'When I have found a form of words that seems to me best to express my thought, I see no reason why I should go out of my way to inflict on any of my readers an inferior version in order to avoid infringing my own copyright.'

The subjects dealt with in the successive lectures are: (1) Faith—Creeds—Revelation; (2) The Creation; (3) Evil and Atonement; (4) The Incarnation; (5) The Trinity; (6) The Church; (7) The Christian. Suggestions are given under each lecture of topics for discussion at group meetings. Under the last lecture ('The Christian') the suggested questions are: (1) To what extent is Church membership necessary to the living of the Christian life? (2) In what form is it reasonable to expect Divine guidance in human life? (3) Ought there to be such a thing as a Christian sociology? If so, what would be its character, and how should we set about formulating it?

Let us see what Dr. HODGSON's answers are to these questions. (1) As to the extent of the necessity of Church membership for the living of the Christian life, the answer is that normally the Christian will be living as a member of the Church. Christianity began as the faith and practice of a community, as the religion of the Church, and men became Christians by being baptised into the community or fellowship. How comes it, then, that the idea of men being first Christians as individuals and then Church members as an extra, has become so familiar to us to-day?

'I suggest this explanation. Christianity, as the faith and practice of the Christian Church, brought into the world a distinctive type of human character—a distinctive way of thinking and living—which was recognized as and called Christian. The influence of this upon the world has been so great that in the course of nineteen hundred odd years it has produced outcroppings of minds and lives of this character outside the membership of the Church. As a result of this we come to think of Christianity as concerned primarily with individual lives, and of Church membership as something extra which a Christian may or may not take seriously.'

It thus amounts to this, that, if we go by the standard, Biblical Christianity, normally the individual Christian is a Christian through his membership of the Church; which is the object and instrument of God's redemptive activity. So

[1] Blackwell; 8s. 6d. net.

that the first thing that his Church membership means to the Christian is the recognition and acknowledgment of his own sinfulness and need of forgiveness.

(2) As for the question of the form in which it is reasonable to expect Divine guidance in our human life, the answer is that the Christian as such must not expect to be miraculously transformed into a genius at solving the practical problems of Christian living. The Christian must submit such intelligence as he has to the training it needs that it may be quickened and enlightened by the Spirit of God.

'Consider the position of a doctor called in to attend a sick man. He is called in because he is more likely than the rest of us to be able to see what is the matter with the patient and what kind of treatment he requires. And he is more likely to be able to do this because, when he comes to the bedside, he has behind him all that he has learned from his study of medicine and his clinical experience. . . . It is because he looks out on the world from a life lived in a communion with Christ and with a mind formed by pondering over the revelation of the Divine character that he [the Christian] trusts when occasion arises to be a Spirit-guided man.'

(3) As for the questions concerning a Christian sociology, that there should be such a thing is in Dr. HODGSON'S view a matter beyond question. Our fundamental obligation is, as he says, to use the intelligence God has given us in order to discover in the world around us the best ways of promoting the eternal and temporal welfare of mankind. 'Temporal' is thus co-ordinated with 'eternal.'

The character of a Christian sociology further appears in the consideration that there is a developing process of the education of man by God in moral sensitiveness, as the Bible shows, and that this process has never stopped; 'only within living memory have we begun to develop a Christian conscience on social, political, and international affairs, and to realize that we have an obligation to be concerned with the relations of corporate bodies such as employers' federations, labour unions, international trusts and states as well as with the problems of individual lives.'

How to set about formulating a Christian sociology is here but faintly adumbrated, but a primary consideration appears to be that a Christian judgment on any particular problem cannot always be formed by the simple method of looking for precedents. 'We have to ask whether we are faced by novel circumstances demanding on our part the creative effort of devising a novel response to them. What our past history is entitled to expect of us is that our approved action should be a consistent development, that it should be "in the tradition"—as the music of Brahms and César Franck may be said to be "in the tradition" of Haydn and Beethoven, though containing elements unthought of by the earlier composers.'

The Use of ἱλάσκεσθαι etc. in Biblical Greek

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THERE is considerable agreement that this word group denotes 'propitiation,' 'appeasement,' in pagan writers, and the two passages sometimes cited as indicating a meaning 'expiation' do not seem conclusive. Thus Plat. *Legg.* viii. 862 c is interpreted by Büchsel as referring to a person, not a thing,[1] and MM seem to accept the meaning of propitiation in the Men Tyrannus inscription.[2] Whether these interpretations be accepted or not, there can be no dispute but that in an overwhelming majority of passages this word group denotes propitiation.

The usage of the LXX is different, and C. H. Dodd has shown conclusively that the notion of a process of celestial bribery is absent from the Old Testament. This is a conclusion for which we must all be thankful, but we must not go on from there to reason that because the pagan idea of an angry god is missing from the Bible, all idea of Divine wrath is absent. In point of fact it is obvious to the most casual reader of the Old Testament that the notion of 'the wrath of God' looms large. The present writer has noted that about thirty words are used to express this wrath, and that they are to be found in a total of five hundred and eighty-five passages. This conception of wrath may have to be understood carefully, but since there is no important part of the Old Testament from which it is absent, it must not be lost sight of in estimating the Old Testament view of atonement. As this wrath must be averted if man is to be safe, it is worth while to examine the

[1] *Theol. Wort.*, iii. 317, n. 75.

[2] *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament, sub* ἱλάσκομαι.

possibility that this averting of wrath is expressed in the word group under consideration.

The Use of ἱλάσκεσθαι in the LXX.

This verb occurs eleven times in all, always in the middle or passive, and always with the Lord as subject (sometimes in petition, 'Be thou,' etc.). It is used absolutely 4x, with dative of person 3x, with dative of sin 3x, and with accusative of sin 1x. The underlying Hebrew is כפר 6x, נשא 3x, נחם 1x, while there is no Hebrew corresponding to Est 13^{17}. It is argued by some that because these verbs convey thoughts like 'forgiveness,' there is no question of propitiation of the Divine anger. But the question is not so simple, for both thoughts may well be present.

Of the four passages where the verb is used absolutely the first, Ex 32^{14} says 'and the Lord ἱλάσθη to preserve His people' (A and F follow MT with 'ἱλάσθη concerning the evil which he said he would do'). The Hebrew verb is נחם, and RV translates 'And the Lord repented of the evil which he said he would do unto his people.' But whatever our precise rendering of ἱλάσθη we should notice that in the context it refers to a removal of wrath, for earlier Moses has asked the Lord 'why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people?' (*v.*[11]) and has prayed 'Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people' (*v.*[12]). The connexion between wrath and the Lord's 'repenting' is plain.

Again, in La 3^{42} ἱλάσκεσθαι translates סלח and can be rendered 'forgive.' But the sort of forgiveness which is meant is one which includes a turning away of wrath as we see as soon as we look at the expression in its context, 'We sinned, we behaved impiously and thou didst not forgive (or wast not propitiated καὶ οὐχ ἱλάσθης). Thou didst visit in anger and pursue us,' etc. So is it with Dn 9^{19} (Th.), 'O Lord, forgive (He סלח)' for in the same prayer comes 'let thine anger and thy wrath, I pray thee, be turned away from thy city Jerusalem' (*v.*[16]).

In the remaining passage, 2 K 24^{3-4}, we read, after a reference to certain disasters, 'Howbeit because of the anger of the Lord was (this) in Judah, that he might remove (them) from his presence for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did. And also he poured out innocent blood, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; and the Lord would not be propitiated.' Here the explicit mention of the Lord's anger, and the stress on the magnitude of the sin combine to show the meaning of the verb.[1]

Thus in each of these passages there is a clear implication of the removal of the wrath of the Lord in the context if not in the Hebrew word being translated. It is at least arguable that the LXX translators chose a word which would preserve this nuance, rather than one of the other forgiveness words which they use elsewhere.

The three occasions when ἱλάσκεσθαι occurs with dative of person fit in with this pattern, although there is no explicit mention of wrath. Two of them are in a single verse, 2 K 5^{18}, where Naaman asks pardon for bowing down in the house of Rimmon, an action prohibited in the Second Commandment on the grounds that Yahweh is a 'jealous God.' Moreover, it should not be overlooked that Naaman has just come out of heathendom, and might be expected to use the word in the typical heathen fashion. The other verse is Est 13^{17},[2] where Mordecai prays 'Hear my prayer and ἱλάσθητι unto thy heritage.' Here the people are under sentence of death and no comment is necessary to show how this could well be interpreted as expressing the wrath of God.

The three passages with dative of sin for which forgiveness is sought are all in the Psalms. Ps 77 (78)[38] practically equates forgiveness and the averting of the Divine wrath when it says, 'But he is compassionate and will forgive (will be propitiated for) their sins, and he will not destroy (them); and he will many times turn away his anger, and will not kindle all his wrath.' The next psalm does practically the same thing with its 'How long, O Lord, wilt thou be angry for ever? Shall thy jealousy burn like fire? . . . Help us, O God our Saviour, for the glory of thy name; Lord deliver us, and ἱλάσθητι ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν for thy name's sake' (Ps 78 (79)[5ff.]). The remaining passage does not mention wrath, but pleads for pardon for the Psalmist's sin 'for it is great' (Ps 24 (25)[11]), and as the psalm goes on it is revealed that the writer is suffering from what might well be regarded as the manifestation of the wrath of God (*v.*[17ff.]), for he has many afflictions, distresses, humiliations, and troubles, and his enemies are multiplied.

Much is sometimes made of the fact that there is one passage with the accusative of sin (Ps 64 (65)[4]), and it is felt that here 'expiate' and not 'propitiate' must be the meaning of the verb. But even if we dismiss the fact that some MSS read the dative (Swete cites ℵ[c.a.] T) the context tells us that 'Words of lawless men have overpowered us' and once more we see the kind of

[1] Some would take θυμός here to mean something like 'purpose' since the Hebrew of the Massoretic text here is עליי יהוה. But even if this be accepted there is still the stress on the magnitude of the sin, and in any case that Manasseh had aroused the anger of the Lord is clear from other passages such as 2 K 23^{26}.

[2] *I.e.*, Addition C *v.*[10].

thing which would naturally be associated with Divine wrath.

Summing up, six times there is explicit mention of wrath in the immediate context, once the people are under sentence of death, twice the Psalmist is greatly afflicted, and on the other occasion the action is that one above all others which the Old Testament regards as provoking God's wrath (twice in one verse). We cannot say that the concept of the wrath of God is certainly absent from any of these passages, and in every one the rendering 'propitiate' is quite appropriate. In the face of all this it is manifestly impossible to maintain that the verb has been emptied of its force.[1]

ἱλασμός in the LXX.

The noun ἱλασμός is found 10x in a variety of contexts. Frequently it is used in connexion with the root כפר, as in 'day of atonement' (Lv 25^{9}), 'ram of atonement' (Nu 5^{8}) etc. Probably Am 8^{14} 'They that swear by the ἱλασμοῦ (בְּאַשְׁמַת) of Samaria' belongs to this circle of ideas also, as does Ezk 44^{27} where the word denotes a sin-offering. We will deal with the concept of atonement when we come to ἐξιλάσκεσθαι.

The word is used of forgiveness in Dn 9^{9} (Th.) 'To the Lord our God belong mercies and ἱλασμοί (הַסְּלִיחוֹת).' Here the whole situation involves the wrath of God, as we see from 'the curse has come upon us' (*v.*[11]), He has brought 'great evils' upon His people (*v.*[12]), and Daniel's prayer 'let thine anger and thy wrath, I pray thee, be turned away,' etc. (*v.*[16]). Ps 129 (130)[4] runs 'For with thee is ὁ ἱλασμός,' and here again we notice from the context that the Psalmist is in trouble ('Out of the depths have I cried' [*v.*[1]]). Propitiation is clearly the meaning of the word in 2 Mac 3^{33} where Onias is offering a sacrifice to deliver Heliodorus from further chastisement and his offering is called τὸν ἱλασμός (RV 'the propitiation'). The whole tenor of the passage leaves no doubt that averting of wrath is in mind.

Thus the propitiatory idea which we have seen involved in ἱλάσκεσθαι is to be discerned also in ἱλασμός. Wherever it means 'forgiveness' the circumstances indicate the turning away of a Divine wrath.[2]

ἱλαστήριον in the LXX.

This word denotes the mercy seat over the ark of the covenant 22x, and one of the ledges on Ezekiel's altar 5x. The word means either 'means of atonement' (so Büchsel, Deissmann, etc.) or 'place of atonement' (Manson), but in either case it is associated with the cultus, and we will deal with the idea involved under ἐξιλάσκεσθαι.

The term also occurs in 4 Mac 17^{22}, though here it may be held to derive from an adjective rather than a substantive. The death of the seven brothers is spoken of, 'they having as it were become a ransom (ἀντίψυχον) for the nation's sin; and through the blood of these righteous men and their propitiatory death (or, the propitiation of their death) the Divine Providence delivered Israel' etc. Here the meaning of propitiation is plain, and this may be of significance for the interpretation of Ro 3^{25}.

ἵλεως in the LXX.

This word occurs 35x in a variety of constructions, and with a greater range of meaning than we have seen with the other members of the group. Despite this greater range, however, there is a general correspondence with the usage we have seen in the other members of the group.

Seventeen times we find the word used with εἶναι, thus giving the thought 'be propitious.' 5x the construction is dative of person, *i.e.*, 'be propitious to such a one.' One of these is 2 Ch 6^{39}, in Solomon's Temple prayer. This prayer is of a cyclic character with the pattern, 'When the people commit sin, and thou afflict them accordingly in such and such a way, if they repent and confess, then hear thou and forgive.' All the afflictions are such as might be caused by the Divine wrath (and in one place or another of the Old Testament each is expressly said to be the result of the anger of the Lord), and it would be going contrary to the whole tenor of Old Testament thought to regard the afflictions mentioned as other than the outworking of the Divine wrath. In view of the setting then, 'forgive' here seems to have the implication of the removal of wrath. In the other passages, Yahweh's 'I am propitious to them' of Nu 14^{20} looks back to His previous statement in *v.*[12] that He would smite and destroy Israel; Jer $5^{1.7}$ both refer to a situation in which the city is under sentence of destruction for her sins, while in Jer 27 (50)[20], though the thought of the verse is clearly 'forgive,' yet it is explicitly said that there will only be a 'remnant' left to forgive after the disasters of *v.*[17f.], which must surely be taken as indications of Divine wrath.

Of the eight occurrences of the expression with dative of sin, 'to be propitious as to such a sin,' five occur in Solomon's Temple prayer, 1 K $8^{34.36.50}$, 2 Ch $6^{25.27}$, where forgiveness must be

[1] The verb is also found in the Sixtine text of 2 Ch 6^{30}, but here again the context speaks of disasters which evidence the Divine displeasure.

[2] ἱλασμός also occurs as the reading of A in Sir 18^{20} and of ℵ* in Sir 32^{6}, but in both places ἐξιλασμός is the better attested reading.

understood as a turning away of the Divine anger, and a sixth in Yahweh's response, 2 Ch 7^{14}, where we cannot take the expression in any other sense than in the prayer itself. Again, while in Jer 43 (36)^{3} the translation 'forgive' is in order, the Lord's mention of 'all the evil which I purpose to do unto them' leaves us in no doubt that the people in question were under the Divine wrath. The final passage in this group, Jer 38(31)^{34} is perfectly general, and the sense we give to the verb will depend on our general conclusions.

ἵλεως εἶναι occurs also 3x in an absolute sense, but as these all occur in the Solomonic prayer, they hardly call for further comment.

The next construction is ἵλεως γένεσθαι which is found in all 9x. The passages are of two classes, according as the expression is taken as meaning 'to forgive' or 'to be merciful' ('to be propitious' being the thought which underlies both). In the first-mentioned sense it is found 3x (2x with dative of person and 1x absolutely). In Nu 14^{19} 'according as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now' we have the same situation of Divine anger that we have already noted, together with the added thought of forgiveness through many provocations in the wilderness, while Dt 21^{8} deals with the finding of a murdered man and the slaying of a heifer by the elders of the nearest city. It is difficult to interpret this other than as a propitiatory rite after which 'Be propitiated for thy people Israel' is quite in place. The prayer of Am 7^{2} in the face of the eating up of all the grass of the land by locusts might well be translated similarly, 'Lord, Lord, be propitiated.'

The expression is found 6x in the Books of Maccabees, always with the dative of person, and in the sense 'to be merciful.' 2 Mac $7^{32f.}$ says 'We are suffering for our own sins, and though our living Lord is angry for a little. . . . I, like my brothers, give up body and soul for our fathers' laws, calling on God speedily to be propitious to the nation . . . and in me and in my brothers to stay the wrath of the Almighty.' In this passage the conclusion can scarcely be resisted that the death of the brothers is regarded as a propitiatory and substitutionary offering, turning the wrath of God away from the nation. The same situation and the same idea of propitiation are to be discerned in 4 Mac 6^{28} 9^{24} 12^{18}. In the remaining two passages, 2 Mac 2^{22} 10^{26}, there is no such clear indication of what we are to understand by the expression, and its sense will be determined by our general conclusions.

In Ex 32^{12} the expression translates נחם in a passage where the propitiatory sense is clearly called for, namely, 'Turn from thy fierce wrath, and be propitiated for the evil of thy people (ἵλεως γενοῦ ἐπὶ τῇ κακίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ σου).'

The other occurrences of the word do not help us much. 7x it is found in the idiomatic phrase 'far be it from thee' etc. and once in the sense 'Peace to you' (Gn 43^{23}).

ἱλάσκεσθαι in the LXX.

This verb is found 105x in the LXX, it being the usual rendering for the recurring phrase 'to make atonement (כִּפֶּר),' which it translates 83x. In passages included in this number there is most frequently a conventional use of the expression without the context giving any indication as to whether there is a removal of wrath thought of or not, but there are not wanting passages where the ideas of atonement and propitiation are linked. Thus in Nu 25 Phinehas slew two sinners and his action is described both as a turning away of the wrath of God (*v.*^{11}) and a making of atonement (*v.*^{13}, ἐξιλάσατο). Quite apart from the question of the particular translation of the Hebrew or Greek verbs, the story is one which clearly demands the concept of propitiation for its correct understanding. Yahweh was angry with the people because of their flagrant sin, and this anger had to be turned away if the nation was not to be consumed. Phinehas saw what was required and performed an action which can only be described as 'propitiatory.'

It is not otherwise with the case of the Gibeonites in 2 S 21. The three years' famine is evidence of the Divine displeasure, and it caused David to seek the reason. On being informed that it was because Saul had slain certain Gibeonites, the king consulted the remaining Gibeonites asking ἐν τίνι ἐξιλάσωμαι (*v.*^{3}), and as a result of their negotiations seven of Saul's descendants were hanged. Plainly here we have propitiation; first the wrath of God causes a famine, then propitiatory action is taken, and finally God is 'entreated' once more (*v.*^{14}, וַיֵּעָתֶר).

It would take too long to examine fully the other passages in which this verb occurs with a propitiatory force, and it must suffice merely to draw attention to some of them, such as Gn 32^{20} (Jacob appeasing Esau with a present), Ex 32^{30} (Moses offering his life for the people as propitiation for their sin of the golden calf), Dt 21^{1-9} (the red heifer as a propitiatory offering to avert wrath in the case of murder committed by persons unknown), Pr 16^{14} (averting the wrath of a king), Nu 16^{46-7} (Aaron's offering of incense turning away the wrath of the Lord shown in the plague that had broken out among the people), and there are other passages. Such passages demonstrate that the word, even as used in the LXX,

retained a certain association with the removal of anger.

Since it is sometimes said that this verb is often used in the sense ' to expiate ' it is worth noticing that it is never followed by an accusative of sin in the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament. There are seven occurrences of this construction, one being in Theodotion's Daniel, namely 9^{24}, where the ' seventy weeks ' decreed upon the people look like a manifestation of Divine wrath ; the remaining six are in Sirach, three of them referring to removal of wrath [1] and probably two more also.[2] This evidence cannot be said to be very strong, and it can be supported by only two passives with sin as subject (1 S 3^{14}, Dt 21^{8}), in both of which it is possible to think of propitiation. The grouping of the nine accusatives of a cultic object (altar, sanctuary, etc.) with this class is not warranted, for the meaning is not the same. If one expiates a sin it is clean gone, but if one cleanses an altar it is still there. It seems best to recognize that the verb had a complex meaning, but to see the removal of wrath as the basic idea. Wrath could be removed with reference to a sin, or with reference to an (unclean) altar, etc.

Again, God is the subject of the verb 3x, but this is exactly balanced by the fact that He is also the object (with the plain sense propitiate) 3x. This brings us to the thought that the verb is often used in a personal sense, the most common construction being *περί* with genitive of person, ' to make propitiation concerning a person ' (found 58x), this sometimes being followed by *περί* or *ἀπό* of sin.

We have already noted that *ἐξιλάσκεσθαι* is the translation of כפר 83x ; for the rest it translates חטא 5x, חלה 3x, פלל and אשם once each (also ירע once, but this seems to rest on a misunderstanding of the Hebrew or a var. lect.), and 11x there is no Hebrew equivalent. Of these it may be said that the חטא passages seem to express much the same meaning as those where כפר is the Hebrew, and the אשם passage probably arises because of the close kinship between חטא and אשם, the three חלה passages all express the sense of propitiation, and the פלל passage probably points back to Nu 25 where propitiation is unmistakably the thought.

The effect of all this is to demonstrate that *ἐξιλάσκεσθαι* in the LXX is a complex word, but the averting of anger seems to represent a stubborn substratum of meaning from which all the usages can be naturally explained, even those with God as subject, for while the Old Testament is emphatic about the reality and seriousness of the wrath of God, the removal of that wrath is due in the last resort to God Himself, for as the LXX of Ps $77(78)^{38}$ says ' He will many times turn away His anger.'

Other Words of the ἱλάσκεσθαι group in the LXX.

Of the other words from this stem *ἐξιλασμός* is found 17x, often in connexion with the cultus, but the sense of propitiation is to be discerned in passages like Wis 18^{21}, Sir $32(35)^{5}$ 18^{20} (see Box and Oesterley's note *in loc.* in Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*), *ἐξίλασις* occurs twice in the expression ' sin offering of atonement ' indicating again the cultus, *ἐξίλασμα* also occurs twice, both times translating כֹּפֶר connecting up with the idea of ransom, *ἱλατής* [3] is found once in the expression ' we found him (*i.e.*, God) propitious ' (1 Es 8^{53}), and the verb *ἱλατεύειν* occurs in Daniel ' but on account of thy mercy, O Lord, be thou propitious ' (Dn 9^{18}, and cf. wrath in *v.*[16]), and with the prefix *εὐ* in Jg 16^{15} where the shaking of mountains and the fearing of God indicate the sterner side to the Divine nature.

The Interpretation of ἱλάσκεσθαι, etc., in the New Testament.

The first passage to be considered is Ro 3^{25} where Christ is referred to as *ἱλαστήριον*. This comes in as part of the climax of an argument that began in Ro 1^{15} where the Apostle mentions preaching the gospel, and this leads him to consider the essential constitution of that gospel, which he sees in the thought of ' a righteousness of God ' being at work, and of the just living by faith. This first mention of justification by faith is followed immediately in logical sequence by the thought of God's wrath. ' For (*γάρ*) wrath of God is being continually revealed from heaven upon all impiety and unrighteousness of men,' etc. Agar Beet is not over-emphasizing the importance of this point when he says ' The entire weight of *vv.*[16. 17], which contain a summary of the Epistle rests upon the assumption that all men are, apart from the Gospel, under the anger of God.' [4] Salvation for St. Paul is essentially a salvation *from* as well as a salvation unto.

In the remainder of ch. 1 St. Paul shows how the wrath of God rests upon the pagan world, and just as the present aspect of this wrath comes out in ch. 1, so the future aspect of wrath is developed in ch. 2 with its ' thou condemnest thyself [*v.*[1]] . . . we know that the judgment of God is in accordance with truth upon them that practise such things [*v.*[2]]. And dost thou reckon . . . that thou wilt flee away from the judgment

[1] Sir 3^{30} 5^{6} 28^{5}.

[2] Sir 20^{28} 31^{23}. The other passage is Sir 3^{3} where the usage is metaphorical.

[3] In the A text. Swete reads *εὐιλάτον*.

[4] *Romans*, 50 f. Cf. Godet and Liddon, *in loc.*

of God? [*v.*3] . . . thou storest up for thyself wrath in a day of wrath and revelation of God's righteous judgment [*v.*5] . . . for them that without law have sinned, without law also shall perish: and them that in law have sinned, through law shall be judged [*v.*12] . . . God will judge the secrets of men [*v.*16].' Such words as these leave no doubt as to the Apostle's burning conviction that the wrath of God is a terrible reality which will ultimately be visited upon the impenitent evil-doer. The remainder of the chapter shows the Jew to be guilty before God, just as the Gentile is, and ch. 3 carries on to show that this does not conflict with the fact that the Jews are the chosen people. Then he is able to sum up his argument so far in the words 'we have already accused both Jews and Greeks of being all under sin.' He emphasizes this with a catena of quotations from the Old Testament, and adds that the purpose behind the law was 'that every mouth might be sealed, and all the world be brought to trial before God.'

It is in this context that the critical passage 3^{21-6} must be studied. The whole force of the preceding portion of the Epistle has been to demonstrate that all men, Jews and Gentiles alike, lie under the condemnation and the wrath of God. The two conceptions are intertwined (cf. 2^5 3^{5-6}), and neither can be separated out from the argument. But now, says Paul, a new factor enters the situation. The whole effect of the law had been to show that men were blameworthy before God, that they were sinners, but now, quite apart from the law there is a righteousness of God revealed, a righteousness leading to the sinner's justification through the work of Christ ὃν προέθετο ὁ θεὸς ἱλαστήριον. The context demands that ἱλαστήριον should include an element of propitiation in its meaning, for St. Paul has brought heavy artillery to bear in demonstrating that God's wrath and judgment are against the sinner, and while other expressions in *vv.*$^{21-26}$ may be held to deal with the judgment aspect, there is nothing other than this word to express the averting of the wrath. Wrath has occupied such an important place in the argument leading up to this section that we are justified in looking for some expression indicative of its cancellation in the process which brings about salvation. This is supported by the undoubtedly propitiatory meaning of the term in the only LXX passage where it does not denote a cultic object, 4 Mac 17^{22}, and where it is joined with a reference to the blood shed in a vicarious death.

So much seems clear. What is not so clear is whether we should understand ἱλαστήριον as signifying 'propitiation' or 'the mercy-seat' (as in most LXX passages). Such scholars as T. W. Manson [1] and Karl Barth [2] adopt the latter alternative, while Deissmann [3] and Vincent Taylor [4] incline to a more general view. It is difficult to decide, but the present writer cannot escape the impression that a general term rather than a specific reference to a cultic object is called for here. Moreover, the Epistle to the Romans does not move in the sphere of Levitical symbolism, and it seems unlikely that a reference should suddenly be introduced to a single article of the tabernacle furnishings without a word of explanation.[5] It seems best, then, to adopt a meaning like 'means of propitiation.'

Concerning the meaning of ἱλάσκεσθαι in He 2^{17} the context gives us no such clear help. The verb is followed by the accusative of sin, and it is urged by some that this indicates that 'to expiate' is the meaning of the verb here. But this does not follow. The accusative of sin is an unusual construction as we have already noted, and it is probably to be understood in some such sense as 'with reference to sins.' This sort of construction is not unknown with verbs which usually are followed by a preposition, and we find it for example with ἀπορεῖσθαι which, like ἱλάσκεσθαι usually takes περί (Lk 24^4, Jn 13^{22}), but in Ac 25^{20} has the accusative, although the meaning appears to be much the same. Similarly one is usually said εὐδοκεῖν ἐν as Mt 3^{17}, 1 Co 10^5, etc., but the direct object is found Mt $12^{18.6}$ Cf. also πενθεῖν ἐπί Rev 18^{11}, accusative 2 Co 12^{21}; κλαίειν ἐπί Lk 19^{41} 23^{28}, accusative Mt 2^{18}; θαυμαζειν ἐπί Lk 2^{33}, or περί Lk 2^{18}, accusative Lk 7^9 24^{12}, etc.; ὑπομιμνήσκειν περί 2 P 1^{12}, accusative Jn 14^{26}; διαμαρτύρεσθαι ἐνώπιον 2 Ti 4^1, accusative 2 Ti 4^2. In none of these cases can it be said that the meaning of the verb has been seriously modified by using the accusative instead of the prepositional construction, and accordingly it may fairly be asked, 'Why should we believe that it is otherwise with ἱλάσκεσθαι?' [7]

In the same connexion it is of interest to notice that some manuscripts read ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις instead of τὰς ἁμαρτίας, Moffatt citing 'A 5. 33. 623. 913, Athan. Chrys. Bentley, etc.' The significance of this surprisingly strongly attested reading would seem to be that the accusative was felt to be a difficult construction and thus we see that in the circles in which the variant arose expiation was not an accepted meaning of the verb.

[1] *JTS*, xlvi. 1 ff.
[2] *Comm., in loc.*
[3] *Ency. Bib.*, col 3033.
[4] THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, l. [April, 1939] 295 ff.
[5] Cf. Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, 132.
[6] The accusative is read by ℵ* B 115, 244, 892, etc., though many manuscripts read εἰς ὅν.
[7] Cf. Blass-Debrunner, *Grammatik*, 89–90.

ἱλασμός occurs twice, in 1 Jn 2^2 4^{10}, and in the first mentioned passage there are a few hints at the meaning propitiation. Thus Christ is said to be 'an Advocate with the Father,' and if we sinners need an advocate with God, then obviously we are in trouble, we are in danger of feeling the consequences of the wrath of God, and ἱλασμός is a natural word in such a context. Thus we should notice that Christ is referred to as 'the righteous' and that His blood is mentioned a few verses earlier (1 Jn 1^7). These taken in conjunction with the use of a word from the ἱλάσκεσθαι group form a striking coincidence with Ro 3^{25}, where we saw reason for thinking that propitiation is in mind. The implication is that there is a similar thought here.[1]

Concerning the use of the term in 1 Jn 4^{10} there is but one observation we would wish to make, namely, that if ἱλασμός be given its usual meaning we have here one of those resounding paradoxes which mean so much for an understanding of the New Testament, whereas if the more colourless meaning 'expiation' is understood the verse is much less striking. In any case the verse is important in the stress it lays on the love of God shown in the ἱλασμός, which is quite in keeping with the generally accepted New Testament thought that the means of averting the consequences of sin come always and only from God's love.

If in the foregoing less than justice has been done to the Biblical teaching of the love of God, and to the fact that the Biblical use of ἱλάσκεσθαι etc., differs from that in pagan writers, this is not from a lack of conviction as to the importance of these things, but rather it is because Dodd and others have demonstrated this very clearly. But it has been our concern to show that when all this is fully realized it still remains that the word group under discussion has reference to the wrath of God, and expresses the great truth that the death of Christ is the means of turning that wrath away from sinners conclusively and finally. Close attention to the context and the constructions used seems to leave us with no other conclusion.[2]

One final point is that the early Christians seem not to have understood ἱλάσκεσθαι as signifying expiation, for we find the verb used in 1 Clement and in Hermas with the accusative of God and the meaning 'propitiation.'[3] If the LXX translators and the New Testament writers evolved an entirely new meaning of the word group it perished with them, and was not resurrected again until our own day. Under all the circumstances it seems more natural to take the words in their usual sense, but to realize that the Biblical writers had abandoned the conception of a process of celestial bribery, and used the word group to signify a removal of the Divine wrath against sin by a process in which God's own holy will had the initiative.

[1] Even Dodd who rejects the idea of propitiation says of this verse, 'in the immediate context it might seem possible that the sense of "propitiation" is in place' (*Moffatt Com., in loc.*).

[2] This does not mean that the love of Christ is being set over against the wrath of the Father. Rather in the spirit of the LXX of Ps 77 (78)[38] we think of the Father Himself as providing the means whereby His righteous wrath against sin may be turned from the sinner.

[3] The passages are quoted in *Theol. Wort.*, iii. 315, n. 67.

Literature

ST. MARK

Dr. R. H. Lightfoot's new book, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Cumberlege; 10s. net), is characteristic—a patient, cautious, scrupulous bit of writing, everywhere redolent of a wise Form Criticism. Pre-eminently 'a Gospel scholar,' he is content to brood long over St. Mark's *pericopae* until he almost thinks himself back into the Evangelist's mind as he penned his Gospel. Dr. Lightfoot does not strive or cry; his scholarship, patent on every page, has no histrionics, no stridencies; but in his grave, reticent, persuasive sentences there is undeniably a subtle charm; and every lover of the earliest Gospel will be grateful for this slim harvest of Dr. Lightfoot's thought.

The book has eight chapters. The first surveys Mark as a whole. The second, which is on Mk 1, holds that Mk 1^{1-13} is the real Marcan Prologue and describes the Incarnation. The third, averring that Mark's main theme is the crucified Messiah, shows how St. Mark used his evangelic materials to prove his theological thesis. The fourth chapter discovers a new parallelism between the apocalyptic ch. 13 and the ensuing Passion story. Ch. 5 maintains that, for St. Mark, the chief point of the Temple Cleansing was the right of the Gentiles to a proper place in the worship of the one true God. Ch. 6 produces theological reasons for St. John's setting of the Cleansing. Ch. 7 (and an Appendix) argues ably but (in my view) not conclusively that the Evangelist meant his

Gospel to end at Mk 16^8. The eighth and last lecture temperately appraises the true value of Form Criticism.

Dr. Lightfoot's patient argumentations do not always persuade, but they always enlighten me. The things which linger in my memory chiefly are his words on the Transfiguration (p. 43), on the rent veil (p. 56), on the universal purpose of Christ's sacrifice (p. 65), on the meaning of Jn 1^{51}, and on the true import of an unfortunate sentence in his Bampton Lectures (footnote to p. 103). If there still survive people who believe that Mark is 'plain biography' or that you can tell the Story of Jesus without theology, they should read this book. For the rest of us the value of the book will be its proof of how pregnant with theological meaning are those 'little stories' told by Mark,

> The saint who first found grace to pen
> The life which was the Life of men.

A. M. HUNTER

THE PASTORAL CARE

Another volume of the Ancient Christian Writers Series emanating from the Catholic University of America has appeared. This volume is *St. Gregory the Great, Pastoral Care,* translated and annotated by Professor Henry Davis, S.J. (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; $3.00). In the year A.D. 590, Gregory, then Abbot of St. Andrew's Monastery, was called to succeed Pelagius the Second as Bishop of Rome. In his humility he was very unwilling to accept the office, and, on being chided for his unwillingness by John of Ravenna, he wrote the *Pastoral Care* to show how demanding the office of bishop was. The book is one of the first, and still one of the best manuals of practical training for the ministry and the direct ancestor of all the Warrack Lectures of the days to come. The book is in four parts. It deals with the difficulties of the pastoral office and the demands it makes upon him who would enter it; the life of the good pastor both public and devotional; the manner of teaching which different people require; the fact that the pastor must ever remember his own infirmities.

Part two opens with one of the finest descriptions of the Christian pastor ever written. 'It is necessary that he should be pure in thought, exemplary in conduct, discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech, in sympathy a near neighbour to everyone, in contemplation exalted above all others, a humble companion to those who lead good lives, erect in his zeal for righteousness against the vices of sinners. He must not be remiss in his care for the inner life by preoccupation with the external; nor must he in his solicitude for what is internal fail to give attention to the external.' There is a warning to those who grow lost in attention to the machinery of the ministry. 'When he implicates himself more than is needful with what is external, it is as though he were so preoccupied during a journey as to forget what its destination was.' There is a wise warning to the successful pastor. 'He may achieve success, but he must fear it, lest his mind become conceited and proud.' The third section deals with how to give admonition to different contrasted sets of people—to men and women, young and old, hale and sick, taciturn and loquacious, slothful and hasty, humble and haughty, obstinate and fickle, those who grieve for their sins and do not abandon them, and those who abandon their sins and do not grieve for them. Thirty-six different such contrasting groups are dealt with so that the section becomes a manual of instruction of how to be all things to all men. There could be nothing more valuable than to put this book into the hands of all candidates for the ministry. As long ago as the close of the ninth century Alfred the Great translated it into West Saxon and wished that every bishop should have and use a copy of it. It is an ancient book but a book which deals with the things that never grow old.

The translation is well done but the notes are rather inadequate, consisting for the most part of identifications of Gregory's Biblical quotations.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

The appearance of *Glaucon*: An Inquiry into the Aims of Education, by Professor M. V. C. Jeffreys (Pitman and Sons; 12s. 6d. net), and *Repair the Ruins*: Reflections on Educational Matters from the Christian Point of View, by Mr. Harry Blamires, M.A. (Bles; 12s. 6d. net) in close succession is a hopeful sign of the times. Each book is written by a Christian who is professionally responsible for the training of teachers, and both writers attempt to relate their Christian faith to their professional problems. Professor Jeffreys, of Birmingham University, has already drawn attention to the choice facing modern educators (in 'Education: Christian or Pagan?'). In this new book he sketches tentative outlines for a Christian philosophy of education. The plan of the book is unusual. Part I examines the nature and purpose of education with special reference to the problems of modern society, while Part II attempts to show that Christian doctrine provides the only satisfactory philosophical basis for the conclusions reached in the empirical inquiry. The first part of the book leads through

a discussion of the human problem, as it is seen in individual development and in the setting of history, to an analysis of the educational problem in our contemporary cultural crisis. It draws attention to the existence in individual and in social life of a tension which can only be released through the redemptive power of love and it claims that 'the purpose of education is to promote personal growth, and in particular to redeem the personal in a world which threatens to destroy personal values.' The second part sets out the specifically Christian answer to the problems of human nature and shows that the gospel of the Cross gives final meaning and authority to the redemptive power of love. The division of the book into two parts is not altogether happy. Part II uses the language of Christian theology and many of Professor Jeffrey's professional colleagues who read Part I with appreciation and profit may feel ill at ease when they pass to the second half of the book. The unity of the book will be obvious to any theologically informed Christian but many likely readers may find a dichotomy which they cannot overcome. This pioneering essay in a long neglected field is most valuable. It is to be hoped that Professor Jeffreys will soon make the unity of his argument obvious in a larger work on the same theme and justify fully his own admirable statement that 'What makes truth religious is not that it relates to some abnormal field of thought and feeling but that it goes to the roots of the experience which it interprets.'

Mr. Blamires, who is Senior Lecturer in English at King Alfred's College, Winchester, has a less ambitious but hardly a less important task. He sets before us very clearly the confusions and contradictions which are implicit in the assumptions accepted, consciously or unconsciously, in many modern educational text-books. He points out that Christian teachers are 'trying to do a Christian job with pagan tools.' They need to be helped to see the implications of their faith in such fields as educational theory, psychology, history and the arts. The need is urgent for at present 'the earnest Christian student of moderate talent and intelligence is infected with scientific humanism, materialism, and determinism as he turns the pages of his text-books.' Any one familiar with the problems of teacher training must admit the need of a unifying philosophy in the educational field. Mr. Blamires may sometimes be guilty of overstating his case and his own somewhat dogmatic position may at times provoke disagreement, but he has focused attention on a most important problem and his book deserves to be widely read and pondered.

J. W. D. Smith

RELIGION IN CHINESE GARMENT

The Lutterworth Press have issued three more of their Missionary Research Series. A mass of facts but little known makes *West African Psychology*, by Mr. G. Parrinder, M.A., M.Th., Ph.D. (25s. net), an interesting and informing book, bringing home to one rather dauntingly how ignorant we are of our fellow-men.

The Concept of Māyā, by Dr. P. D. Devanandan (21s. net), is a close-knit study of that Indian conception, starting far back in Indian literature and religion, and of course stressing Sankara; and on the other side Rāmānuja. Many other famous men pass, somewhat hurriedly, before us—there is not space or time for more—Tukaram, Tulsi Das, and all the rest of them. The book ends with an interesting study of Māyā and the Modern Hindu mind.

But for most of us, far the most appetising fare is *Religion in Chinese Garment*, by Dr. Karl Ludvig Reichelt (one feels admirably translated) (15s. net). There are in it vivid first-hand studies of Confucianism, Taoism, Chinese Muhammadanism, and the like. But Dr. Reichelt is an authority on Mahayana Buddhism; and it is when he comes to that that his powers come fully into play. He knows. He is the founder of the Christian Mission to Buddhists. He has lived in friendly intimacy with Buddhist priests. He understands them and their faith. And it takes some understanding. For the Chinese Buddhist scriptures are seven hundred times as long as our own Bible. But one agrees with the author that it is a noble religion which has as its slogan 'the salvation of every living thing' and that sends young men to ordination with that august end in view. So many of them have at times made a retreat from civil life that it seemed to the authorities a menace, and on occasion they have been forced out into the world again, once two hundred and sixty thousand of them. It is all set down for us here, briefly, and getting at the heart—the monks' life, their three services a day, the solemnities at their ordinations and elsewhere, the remembrance of the dead and the masses said for them. And above all the Pure Land school with its strange approximations in some ways to Christianity, 'the most popular and active element in the religious life of the East,' with its weight leaning upon faith in Amitabha and Kwanyin, the Goddess of Mercy, and the hearer of prayer. These things seem foreign indeed to Buddhism. 'Considered in a purely external way, the distance between the distinctive Amitabha worship and the more orthodox Buddhism seems to be immense, so great in fact, that they seem two different religions. Upon deeper consideration, however, the distance separating

them does not appear to be so overwhelmingly great.' The solution is set down for us in a few memorable pages.

A. J. Gossip

Candidate for Truth (Church Book Room Press ; 5s. net), by Mr. J. C. Pollock, a young writer, was originally written for the purpose of helping young people to see the meaning and relevance of the gospel for to-day. It has the merit of being set in a picturesque frame and of containing some fresh illustrative instances. It is also a clear and thoughtful piece of writing. It may be described as an apologetic for the Christian faith in the sense that it lets the Christian faith speak for itself out of the Gospels, realizing that the gospel story has supplied all along the best credentials of the Christian faith. But it is not Christian apologetic in the full modern sense, inasmuch as it does not take account of the modern movement in New Testament criticism. Yet it is an impressive book and deserves wide circulation.

Yet another book from the busy pen of Father Gerald Vann, O.P.—*The High Green Hill* (Collins ; 7s. 6d. net). As the Preface says, no single theme or thread of thought runs through the essays or discourses here published ; but it has the unity of a book that seeks through Christ to see the light in a dark world. The chapters consist of broadcast addresses and articles from magazines and reviews, and are all written in a thoughtful vein and rich in spiritual appeal. The address that gives the title to the book begins with a reference to the symbolic use of the hill in art and literature ; in fact leads us from Hampstead Heath (near the chapel in which the address was given) to the high green hill of Golgotha. The burden of the address is that we human beings should seek scope for our desire of the eternal hills.

There are many characters in the New Testament of whom next to nothing is recorded except that once they came face to face with Jesus. We are not told how they reflected on that great experience in after-days. Mr. Robert Strong, M.A., B.Litt., has let his imagination play with that problem in his book *High Days and Ordinary* (Epworth Press ; 6s. net) ; and has given us what he calls 'imaginary studies in the lives of New Testament characters.' He gives us thirteen : in reality the last on St. Paul's obedience to the heavenly vision does not quite fit, inasmuch as it is a familiar theme which needs none of the imagination required by 'the quarrelling brothers' or 'the ten lepers,' or 'the defeated lawyer.' Mr. Strong writes well, and displays not merely imagination but considerable psychological insight. With the desperately scanty data we have in the New Testament narrative one feels that another imagination might give a rather different picture. Still it is interesting.

No one who knew the late Rabbi Dr. Samuel Daiches could fail to have an affectionate regard for him. For thirty-seven years he was Lecturer in Bible, Talmud, and Homiletics at Jews' College, London. When he retired in 1945 he made a selection of some thirty articles, many of them on the Psalms, from the numerous studies he had contributed to theological journals. These have now been published under the title *Bible Studies* (Goldston and Son ; 10s. 6d. net). Dr. Daiches was a true scholar, a Barrister-at-Law, and in his early days an Assyriologist of note. He made no concessions to modern critical scholarship, which he used to call—without the slightest bitterness, for he was the kindliest of men—'excavation exegesis' in contrast to his own method of 'internal exegesis.' Probably few readers of this journal share his method or will agree with very many of his exegetical conclusions. But many will welcome this memorial to a good man. The Chief Rabbi has written a brief Foreword and there is an excellent portrait of Rabbi Daiches.

The Rev. Cyril H. Powell, B.A., a young Methodist minister, described by Dr. Leslie Weatherhead as 'of much promise and ability,' undertakes in his book, *Faith that Moves Mountains* (Independent Press ; 12s. 6d. net), to expound the real nature of faith as shown by the relevant passages of the New Testament. It is a patient and industrious piece of work, rich in expository description and interpretation. The author's aim is to unbare the sources of power that operated in the beginnings of Christian history and are not allowed free course to-day. Starting with the Synoptic Gospels he goes on to Acts and the Epistles and concludes with the Fourth Gospel. All the time he is on the look out for signs of deterioration in the meaning of faith. Does faith remain the unfaltering and undivided response of the whole personality to God ? He finds that the evolution of Christology in the Pauline and Johannine writings made for the enfeebling of faith. 'The final result visible in the New Testament is demonstrated when the word itself, describing a subjective faculty, is turned to an objective use, and "*the* faith" makes its emergence After this, the grounds of faith's exercise are

understood by all too many to be rigidly specified. Faith becomes "saving faith"; and men can even think of it as the assent of the intellect to the propositions regarding Christ's Life, Death, and Resurrection. Its dynamic nature, and its creative genius, come to be forgotten or ignored.'

The Inter-Varsity Fellowship is publishing a special uniform edition of works by Professor O. Hallesby, Ph.D., who appears to be as well known in the United States of America, through translations, as in his native Scandinavia. He is President of the International Federation of Evangelical Students. 'Prayer' is the first title in the series of works that are being published in this new edition. The second and third titles, *Conscience* and *Why I am a Christian*, are now before us. The cost in each case is 6s. net, and the format is pleasant and attractive. The first is a practical study in the cure of souls, and the second is a word to honest doubters. It is easy to understand the popularity of the Professor's books in certain Christian circles. It is not only that he is faithful to the traditional Biblical standpoint of the Protestant churches; it is also that his style is clear, simple, direct, and homely, showing analytical power, and illuminated by references to personal experience. Some will think his expositions to be at times long drawn out, but that is another matter.

Johann Georg Hamann, An Existentialist (Princeton Theological Seminary, N.J.; 75 cents) is No. 6 of the Princeton Pamphlets series. It comes from the hand of Walter Lowrie, to whom we are indebted for all that he has done to bring the writings of Kierkegaard before the English reader. Here he gives an account of the life of Hamann and of some of his writings. He represents Hamann as an existentialist in his relation to God—the living God who speaks to men not merely in sacred history, but in history as a whole, and who necessarily became incarnate in Christ; and also in his emphasis upon the bodily man, the man of flesh and blood, so that man's response to God must be a response of the whole man, of his passions as well as his intellect.

Miss Geraldine Cummins has for some time come before the public as the instrument through whom an other-worldly message of Cleophas has revealed additional matter about Jesus, Paul and the earliest days of the Church. Her latest 'Scripts of Cleophas' entitled *I Appeal Unto Caesar* (Psychic Press; 10s. 6d. net) deals with Paul's experiences from his last arrival at Jerusalem to his entry to Rome, but has a good deal to say about Paul's sister and her son, Felix, Agrippa, Simon Magus, Mark, Luke, John, and others. The most interesting chapter, perhaps, is one which narrates the post-Crucifixion story of the Blessed Virgin, and her meeting with Paul.

The work raises, of course, psychological and 'psychic' problems, but from a literary viewpoint it is almost fascinating.

In *Christ and Western India* (Wilson College, Bombay; 8s. net) Dr. Elizabeth G. K. Hewat has been most successful in weaving a consecutive narrative of mission development through a century and a half in Western India. The interest is maintained throughout by her clear and vivid style, and by the thrilling nature of the events she records. She has read much on the subject, has a sensitive documentary conscience, and her breadth of experience has enabled her to avoid both the superficiality of the transitory observer and the parochialism of the life-long residenter. Far too many people from the West reach Bombay and go no farther, but, though a photograph taken through an archway may be satisfying, it must not be assumed too readily that the view through the 'Gateway of India' gives a picture in true perspective of the whole of India.

Most phases of missionary work are usefully recorded and discussed. We could wish that Dr. Hewat had said more about the history of the famous College to which she belongs, but probably modesty forbade. There is no doubt about where she stands in regard to the value of missionary colleges. This value is questioned, she suggests, rather by missionary boards at home than by those who know the facts at first hand. She roundly trounces the critics, but discreetly concentrates attention upon an inquiry Commission of 1889, in connexion with which she can cite the opinions of such doughty champions as Principal Miller of Madras and Principal Mackichan of Bombay. Her book will be a useful corrective to that tendency to misunderstanding and depreciation of the aims of the larger missionary colleges which seems to seize periodically—usually at intervals of about a decade—upon those who in the homeland have the direction of missionary affairs, and erupts in the form of inquiry Commissions. Dr. Hewat bases her defence on the principle that 'truth cannot be received in a vacuum,' and she uses adroitly a metaphor of Professor Jessop that ideas have to be put into the mind and are like hooks, drawing other ideas after them. Dr. Hewat's narrative shows that in case after case such clusters of ideas have laid hold of the whole personality, and have resulted in life-long devotion to the faith of Jesus Christ and the service of His Church.

The Mind of Christ

III. Is the Gospel Simple?

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It is, I believe, a matter of agreement that in order to answer the question that gives its title to this article we must take two fundamental things for granted. The first is that the gospel is good news about God, the second that this good news is only to be discovered and understood in Jesus Christ. As we shall see, there is a profound and intimate and indissoluble connexion between these two affirmations. In the end they are not really two affirmations at all but two aspects of the same affirmation.

Let us begin with Jesus. What stands out before everything else in the gospel narratives is His massive and confident sense of God. This is evident in a hundred ways—in His repudiation of the voices of temptation in the wilderness, in His power to heal body and spirit, in His kingly serenity before His accusers, in His certainty that His weak disciples will be given power to carry on His work. God is *there* and because He is there, men can count on Him utterly. But on what kind of God can they count? If we consider the teaching of Jesus, the answer is not in doubt. God is Father, loving, gracious, holy, good. He loves men, all men, with an undiscriminating and overflowing love. In other words, Jesus tells us plainly *something of immense importance about the continuing, unchanging character of God.* What God is in the mind of Jesus He is unalterably and for ever. Simple as this sounds, we cannot remind ourselves of it too often. The 'mighty acts' of God in history, to which the theology of our own day rightly points, have no good news to convey to us unless the revelation which they constitute is the revelation not only of a God who *once loved* but of a God *whose nature is love.*

But we have to do not only with the teaching of Jesus but with His ministry, His death, His rising again. Jesus not only told us about God, He showed us God in His own life. On the one side, He taught by means of parable and story what the unchanging character of God as loving Father is: on the other, He demonstrated this character in action by the quality of His own living. It is here that we pause to note the intimate relationship between Jesus Himself and the gospel. While Jesus spoke a great deal about God, He also spoke much about Himself. In demanding from men a response to Himself and His message He sought to leave no doubt that what He was really asking from them was a response to God. He claimed not only to speak and to act with an authority derived from heaven, but to be Himself the very Son of God. All this is extremely puzzling unless we can say that Jesus did something far more revolutionary than announce God as Father. He brought the Father with Him. As Dr. D. M. Baillie and other recent scholars have reminded us, we are constrained to say 'God is like Jesus,' but we are constrained to go further and say 'God was in Christ.' This appears at the very outset of the ministry of Jesus. He came into Galilee heralding the good news of the Kingdom. The Kingdom of God, God's mighty and saving rule, was even then breaking upon them. It was present where the lame were healed, where sight was restored to the blind, where the captives were set free from bondage. The Kingdom was being realized wherever Jesus went because wherever He went He took the Kingdom with Him. It was present in Him because God was present in Him. The Kingdom was the Kingdom of the Father.

We can see, in the light of these statements, what it means to say that there is an inseparable connexion between the fact that the gospel is good news about God and the fact that the good news is to be found in Christ. The link of gold that fastens the two things together is the insight which lies, in one form or another, at the heart of the apostolic proclamations within the New Testament: God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. As one of our Scottish theologians has put it, God was *personally present in Jesus* in a sense in which He is present in no other. Now it is the character of this personal presence, how it works, what it achieves, that supremely concerns us. To understand this we need to consider the life and ministry of Jesus in its totality. Emil Brunner has provided us with a useful illustration in the parabola. What he calls the 'self-movement of God' begins in heaven, descends through the Incarnation into the life of Jesus, reaches its nadir in the Cross, and climbs back again into heaven through the Resurrection and the Ascension. This whole movement is a movement *of God* and a movement of God's *continuing self-giving.* We are accustomed in Protestant thought to single out the Cross as the significant moment in the movement as a whole. But the Cross in showing the uttermost length to

which God's love goes in order to redeem man only brings out the inner meaning of the whole. From start to finish God is giving Himself to men and seeking to find men in His Son. The Cross is the final, clinching extension of the principle that operates through all the ministry of Jesus. It is the principle of urgently concerned and self-sacrificing love. When the Pharisees scowled at Him for seeking out publican and sinner, He told them by the aid of three matchless parables that God is always searching in His great love for His lost children. And He clearly implied not merely that He was searching as God searched but that God was searching through Him.

The gospel, then, which Jesus preached is emphatically not to be separated from the gospel which Jesus was. That is what we mean when in traditional language we assert that Jesus reveals God. In knowing Christ we know God. Let me emphasize, at the risk of repetition, that it is God we know. It is possible to stop at Jesus when we should be led by Jesus to God. As Mascall has suggestively put it, Christian faith may be Christo-centric : it cannot be Christo-terminal. I think the truth of this is best illustrated with reference to the Atonement. It is vital for Christian faith that what Christ does for man is not separate from but one with what God does for man. Christ does not stand simply over against God in His sacrifice : God stands behind Christ or, as the New Testament even more strongly has it, God is in Christ. P. T. Forsyth put it into one of his characteristic phrases : ' The sacrifice was a sacrifice in which the Son could not outdo the Father.' One of the weaknesses of substitutionary views of the Atonement is that they can never bring out the wonderful fulness of meaning that is contained in the Biblical thought that in Christ God Himself is reaching out in love and bearing man's sin upon His own heart. The work of Christ, as theologians call it, is the work of God precisely because God was in Christ.

If what we are maintaining is true, it follows that the wrong kind of comparison must not be drawn between God's action in Christ before the Cross and His action after the Cross. It is true that not until the full course of Christ's life had been run, not until He bowed in submission as He commended Himself to His Father, not until He was raised in triumph from the grave was the full story of revelation complete. It is with all that Christ was and did in view (including the Cross), in fact with what our fathers called the ' finished work,' that we say ' God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.' The complete story makes the complete gospel. But because the story, as complete, gives us the decisive demonstration of the love of God in saving action we must not infer that in the life of Jesus, before the story was complete, that love was somehow not fully effective. Because we look back on the Cross from our place in history, that Cross is for us the measure of the love of God. But it is the measure of that love only because it is the culmination of the life in which that love is already vehemently at work. We read depth into the Cross because the Jesus who hangs there is already the Jesus whose hand did not shrink from touching the leper and whose lips kissed even the betrayer. How much could the Cross tell us of a love that never wearies in its search for man unless we had already seen something of such untiring love in Christ's dealing with men and, not least, with His own disciples ? The contrast is most mischievous when it is suggested that before the Cross there could be no full forgiveness achieved in Christ's ministry. Christ did forgive. The Cross does not make it possible for God to forgive. It shows what His forgiveness is.

We are now in a position to raise the question we asked at the beginning of this article, ' Is the gospel simple ? ' If this means ' Is the essential core of the gospel such that once it is stated it is not difficult to understand ? ' then the answer must be ' Yes.' We have now seen that this essential core consists in the fact that in Jesus Christ God comes out towards us in the seeking and patient love which carries on its own heart the burden of our sin and estrangement. The words of Scripture leap to our mind when we try to find words to express this—' God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son,' ' God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,' ' God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' All such Scriptural words become warm and intimate and dear when the individual translates them into his own language and whispers with wonder to his soul ' God cares for me. He cared enough to send Christ.' At this level there is a great simplicity in the gospel and woe betide the man who obscures it, whether by a life that fails to confirm it or by a theology which loses it in a tangle of definitions. To this simplicity we must keep returning. For what strengthens the Christian and the Christian Church to go on with their sometimes heart-breaking task is the renewal of the awareness that because God so greatly cares, He will continue to succour and uphold. The love of God will never let us go.

The simplicity of the gospel springs from its pre-occupation with the personal. It is concerned with God and man and with the relation between God and man. When Professor Farmer speaks, as he does in his most recent book *God and Men*, of ' the radical and consistent personalism ' of Christianity he is quite justified. The fontal and creative thing in Christianity is its joyful affirmation about the character of a person, the Ultimate

Person, and His attitude to finite persons. What God is aiming at is fellowship, nothing less than a communion of persons living in the power of a reciprocal love rooted in His love. Anything, therefore, which makes God or man less than truly and fully personal impairs or destroys the relationship between them. By the same act it takes the heart out of the gospel which gives this relationship its meaning and depth. No age is free from the danger of such depersonalizing. Carnegie Simpson was aware of this when he wrote 'The Christian Gospel, which is Christ Himself, may be depersonalized by being institutionalized: by being intellectualized: by being doctrinalized: by being subjectivized.'[1] When men make a strong plea for 'the simple gospel,' they may be protesting, without knowing it, for the primacy of the personal. They recognize, even when they cannot always put it into words, that the deepest thing in the gospel is what it has to say about God the Father and the worth His love gives to His children.

But the simplicity of the gospel must not be misunderstood. It is not the simplicity of that which is completely comprehensible to man but of something mysterious and subduing. It is not the simplicity of something which happens easily and without cost but the simplicity of that which wounds heaven itself. What here confronts us is the very agony of God. That the Holy God should take our nature upon Himself and in Christ should suffer on our behalf—this is something so strange that we could never even have imagined it for ourselves. Thus when the gospel in its simplicity breaks upon the human heart, that heart is overwhelmed by a love it can never fully understand. Again the gospel is not simple in the sense that it can be kept within the narrow range of personal life, understood as the private life of the individual. Our life is compact of relationships within a given framework. Since the framework exists in order to make life tolerable and good, the gospel has a bearing upon it. In the plan of God the material world, which comes as man does from the hand of God, is for the use and delight of man. Therefore things and the right use of things come into the proper orbit of the gospel. And, not least, the gospel is not simple in the sense that once a man begins to understand its meaning he can do no other than make a positive answer to it. The gospel confronts man as a summons to come home to God, but the mere fact that it thus confronts him does not of itself guarantee that the answer will be 'Yes.' The peril and the problem of unbelief, of resistance, of rejection of God, remain. There is that in the gospel which is a stumbling-block to the 'natural man.' He must be ready to sink his pride and self-dependence and trustfully place himself in the hands of his Father. What should concern the Christian and the Christian Church is that they do not add to this stumbling-block other stumbling-blocks of their own making. The 'simple gospel' has its own 'difficulties': we need not add others. But this is to state the matter negatively. It is not enough to refrain from creating fresh stumbling-blocks. We must be so possessed ourselves of the gospel, so mastered by the love of God that we ourselves become bearers of the Good News to our fellows.

[1] *The Evangelical Church Catholic*, 47.

In the Study

Virginibus Puerisque

Her Half-Crown

By the Reverend C. M. Hepburn, B.D., Crieff

'A woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment . . . poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.'—Mt 26[7].

Not long ago a friend told me a lovely story of a very small girl. On her fifth birthday Mary, for that was her name, had a great surprise, because she was given a new half-crown. She carried it about the house with her, and she was seen sitting on the stairs admiring the treasured coin. Well, her Mummy wondered what she was going to do with it, so she said, 'What are you going to do, dear, with your new half-crown?'

'Take it to Sunday School,' Mary said promptly.

'To show teacher?' her Mummy then asked.

Mary shook her head. 'No,' she said decisively. 'No, I'm going to give it to God. He'll be as surprised as I am to get something besides pennies.'

Mary's decision to give to God her new half-crown was matched once, as a matter of fact in my own Sunday School, by a small girl whose name also began with an M—Morag. She put into the special box, our model church, which we use for birthday thank-offerings a whole postal order for half a crown, instead of cashing it and putting in sixpence. I only found out afterwards it had been her birthday present from her Daddy.

Now I believe that God must be glad of a little extravagance like that. I'm not just imagining it.

Something of a similar nature, for example, once happened to Jesus and gave Him a wonderful thrill of gladness. It was when He was in a house at dinner and the name of the woman who did it was Mary. She possessed some most precious perfume and she poured out the whole of it for the Master, so that the whole place was perfumed with it. I'm sure those who were sitting there gave a gasp of surprise. All save one, who scowled. I mean Judas. He thought it should have been sold for money and the money handed to him for the bag. Jesus, however, said that it was the most beautiful thing He had ever experienced and that it would be 'a memorial of her,' as it is, for it has never been forgotten.

When it is a matter of giving to God, it should be that way also with our love and our life. We owe the gift of life to God, so it seems to me a poor thing when we are merely willing to serve Him, not with all our heart and mind and might, but with only bits and pieces of our lives. When General Booth of the Salvation Army, of whose wonderful work he was the founder, was dying he declared, 'God has had all there was of William Booth.' All there was of him—not simply a little bit here and a little bit there. That's the sort of extravagance that He is entitled to get from us also.

Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the Kings of kings.

Twopence

By the Reverend Alison Etheridge, Testwood Vicarage, Totton, Southampton

'He took out two pence.'—Lk 10^{35}.
'Christ is the Head.'—Eph 4^{15}.

There are a great many people to-day who say, 'I don't care tuppence'; there are some who even go further and say, 'I couldn't care less.' Now we all agree that people who don't care are not very much good. One player in a team who doesn't care whether he wins or loses may make all the difference to the result of the match.

Our country is going through a very difficult time in these days; we have to sell more things abroad if we are going to earn enough to buy the essentials we need from other countries, but there are some folk who don't care about this at all—they don't care tuppence. This 'don't care' spirit makes the solving of our problems even more difficult. Then there are some people who don't care tuppence about God. They can't be bothered to remember that they are dependent upon Him for everything, and that He is the giver of all good gifts. One thing we are learning to-day is this—that, when people don't care about God, they soon begin to care less about other folk. That is why there is so much cruelty in the world to-day. One of the saddest sights in the world is to see children who are neglected and uncared for. As we remember how much our own happiness depends on the care and attention we receive at home, let us do all we can to stop the 'don't care' spirit from spreading, determine never to become people who go about bragging that they 'don't care tuppence.' How miserable we would be if others didn't care about us.

But there are some people who do care tuppence. Think of the story of the Good Samaritan. Do you remember how he treated the wounded traveller? He was very probably in a hurry, but he gave up his time to the injured man; he put his wine and his oil on his wounds; he set him on his own donkey so that he himself had to walk; and he took him to an inn. Surely no one could do more? But he *could*. Next day he gave twopence to the innkeeper, about £1 of our money to-day, and promised to pay any more that was spent. I wonder what the traveller thought about it all? I expect he was almost overwhelmed with gratitude as he lay on his bed. He said to himself, 'To think that that Samaritan who has done so much for me could still care tuppence for me. How very wonderful!' The story of the Good Samaritan is the story of what God does for us.

Tuppence! When you look at two pennies you can see two heads. Remember two heads are better than one. Christ is the Head. As Girl Guides and Boy Scouts you have promised on your honour to do your best. What do you mean by your best? Do you agree that doing one's best in an examination means paying close attention to all the lessons given in preparation, then studying the notes provided and the books recommended very carefully, and finally answering the questions as accurately and clearly as possible? What would you say to some one who said, 'I did not pay attention in classes, I did not bother to read any notes or books, I just did my best when I got into the exam room'? What would you say? Would you agree that that was doing one's best? I'm sure you would not; nor would the teacher! Doing your best in exams means using all the help the teacher provides, plus your own best efforts. So it is with life. People who talk vaguely about doing their best without bothering God are not doing the best that they could. Those who are doing their best in the sight of God are those who use all the help He provides and then put their backs into it, and really do their best. That is why prayer and worship are so important. They are the surest ways in which we can receive God's help. We need His help before we can begin to do our best because two heads are better than one.

Wanted, an Epidemic

By the Reverend W. R. Entrican, B.A.,
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'They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.'—Ac 4^{13}.

Some weeks ago the newspapers were saying that the influenza epidemic was past its peak. They were rather too hopeful but perhaps better weather will soon bring it to an end. The worst thing about flu is that you cannot keep it to yourself. If it gets into a family or a shop or an office it is likely to go round everybody. It is curious to wonder why such unpleasant things as fevers and flu should be so easily passed from one person to another. The law of infection is one we think we could quite well do without.

We must remember, however, that pleasant things are infectious too. Have we never sat glooming about the fire some evening when a cheerful person has arrived and, behold, in a twinkling we were laughing and joking and making merry? Think how infectious kindness is. One really kind person can make a whole family, a whole village, or a whole church kind. John Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress* gives us an example of the infection of unselfishness. Christiania and her family were leaving Interpreter's house, but before they started off they were given new garments for the journey. What happened was just this: 'You are fairer than I am,' said one. 'You are more comely than I am,' said another.

Many fine causes have grown by infection. Thomas Barnardo left Dublin nearly a century ago to train as a doctor in London. There he discovered the waifs of the great city sleeping out under arches and in the nooks and corners of gaunt warehouses. Slowly he got others to take an interest in these uncared for children until as early as 1868 his Home had the reputation of never refusing a destitute child.

Did you ever ask how our Christian Faith spread? It started with Jesus. He came overflowing with the love and goodness of God, burning with the vision of a Kingdom of Right and Truth. But how did the Faith get out into the world? It did so because Jesus called unto Him twelve disciples and infected them. True, it took quite a while before these men really got the Faith seriously. At first their love was shallow and their vision dim. But in the end they were properly smitten. When they were scattered far and wide from Jerusalem they went planting the germs of their Faith by word and deed until churches grew up all over the ancient world and the Faith came finally to our shores. And we are here in church to-day not just because it is a good habit to go to church but because the Faith has caught us too.

Doctors tell us that some diseases are spread by 'carriers.' Oddly enough the carriers don't take the disease themselves: they simply pass it on. That is what makes them dangerous—nobody knows their power to infect.

In the Christian Faith, of course, it is only those who really have it who can spread it. They are the true carriers of the gospel and they alone can give it to others.

Can you imagine what a change there would be if all Christians had this Faith seriously enough? They could start a world-wide epidemic for good. If that did happen this world would soon be a safer, cleaner, brighter place. Shameful things and things that are cruel and mean would disappear. Love and joy and hope would abound. It would be a new world and there would be a new age. Do you think we can help that to happen?

There is something you can do about it. You can bring your own life as close as possible to Jesus. You can keep your mind open to His teaching and your heart to His Spirit. That is how to begin—by catching the Faith, or rather by being caught by it. Most epidemics have to be fought and stamped out. Here is one for you to catch and spread.

When the Bible speaks of salvation it means wholeness or health, and this health is infectious. Are you one of those who help this salvation to go to the ends of the earth?

The Christian Year

First Sunday after Trinity

Love Never Faileth

By Prebendary R. Wragge Morley, M.A.,
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'Love never faileth.'—1 Co 13^{8} (R.V.).

There is something that always holds us in this great chapter of St. Paul. It is not merely the witchery of the words, though great poetry does move us and great prose stir us to the depths. Perhaps we do not associate these enough with God, and the American essayist was right when he said that most of us 'read God in a prose translation.' But it is not only the witchery of the words which catches at our hearts in this chapter. We hear it and we feel that it is essential truth, and something in us responds. You remember the old advertisement of the Gramophone Company—the dog with his head on one side, surprised and yet satisfied by the sound of 'His Master's Voice.' So it is with us as we listen to St. Paul's words here.

But these words! Why of them all take these? Surely these at least are not true. Here St. Paul has slipped up in the enthusiasm of his heart.

Does not even the New Testament show love thwarted, baulked, defeated, from time to time? 'He came to his own and his own received him not.' What about that? And this, 'Judas . . . having received the sop, went immediately out, and it was night.' Or, to leave those far-off days, our eyes look out and see a divided Christendom and world. 'Love never faileth!'—how can we say it and look life in the face?

But St. Paul predicted no easy or instant victory for love. Listen! 'Love endureth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things,' and still lasts on; refuses to give up; keeps on trying; or, as Tyndale translated it, 'love never falleth away.' Love will last when all the trumpery triumphs of force and ingenuity fade away. For love is of the essential fabric of life. Love is of God.

1. *We are committed to the way of love.* A President of a College was one day given a difficult task. He was asked to furnish a text or motto to be carved over the chancel arch of a new central church in an Eastern capital. It was to be eighteen letters and spaces in all. He thought of all that would take place there—weddings, funerals, and the preaching of the gospel itself—and for the essential message he chose 'Love never faileth.'

As Browning's Festus cries out:

God! Thou art Love! I build my faith on that!

Is there any other foundation that will do? But if God is love, then our way must be love too. And Harnack is right when he says: 'Christianity is infinite love in ordinary intercourse.'

But we have more to go on than a surmise or an intuition. The teaching of Jesus is shot through and through with this demand for love. 'What is the fundamental law of life?' asks a lawyer. 'Love,' says Jesus—love to God and to our fellow-men everywhere.

And He is so sure of it, not out of any life of easy circumstance, or because He has shut His eyes to all the tragedy and sordidness around Him, but in the face of it all. He is ready to go to any length to support His view—He does go to any length, for He goes to the Cross, for no other purpose than to put it past any doubting.

There is a well-known incident from the life of Lincoln. In the midst of the Civil War, with affairs of State pressing on him, he still visited the wounded in the hospitals. One evening he came to the bed of a lad not far from death. Deeply moved Lincoln sat by him and asked him if there was anything he could do. And the boy said, Yes. Would he write a letter to his mother. He did it. It took a long time, for the boy found composition hard. He signed it and then said: 'Please write your name too. I would like her to know how kind you have been.' Lincoln signed the letter 'Abraham Lincoln.' 'What,' said the lad, 'you are not the President! I would not have asked you if I had known.' 'Is there anything else I can do—anything at all?' 'Oh, sir, I know I can't last long. If you would see me through.' The President's arms went round him, supporting him—ten o'clock, eleven, twelve; the hours went by, till at the flush of dawn the boy passed over. The President had seen him through. There is something there that gets our hearts, something real, something elemental, something Godlike; and there is that in us which recognizes the ultimate things when we see them—things like integrity, truth, beauty, and above all, love. Why then do we doubt the efficacy of love?

2. *Is it because we misconceive what love really is?* We so readily think of it as something weak, emasculated, flabby—the love of a thrilling emotion, or of a doting parent. And we see a religion of love as being little better than being kind to granny and the cat. And, of course, we are dead wrong. For Christian love is ribbed through and through with principle. It is moral love that seeks above all to conserve life's highest values. Last Sunday some one asked me what I thought of the answer of the Head of a Theological College to one who asked concerning a conflict between truth and love. His answer was: 'If truth and charity clash, let truth go to the wall.' I told her that in regard to the individual problem presented to him doubtless he was right, in so far as any general statement can be; but it must always be remembered that there is not only truth but essential truth—truth we dare not at any cost let go—truth to which we must hold or there is no foundation for love or lasting strength in love. True love will not let the loved one down. It will not let life down. Its greatest aim is to make life finer, richer, fuller. It is not selfish, but other-regarding. So its chief aim is never ease or smoothness at any cost, but the true encouragement and enrichment of the one loved.

So our New Testament takes a new word for it—not fitful, passionate 'eros' but 'agape,' love that has virtue at its heart. This love is 'the out-reaching power of the imagination by which we grasp and make real to ourselves the being of others.' It is 'to possess a great desire that the life of another shall be blessed and to act upon that desire.' 'We love because he first loved us.' Is there anything weak or self-regarding in the love of God as we see it in Jesus? Do we really think an easy, condoning kindness is after the pattern of that love? Can we doubt that the love that drove Him to the Cross persists? And, if it does, love is enthroned above life, and is the

secret of life; and when we learn its way, life will be greater, freer, and more sure.

3. *For love is the enriching factor in life.* Man has to come back to it always when he wants something constructive done. There are times when force must be used. Love for humanity and love's hope for the future demand it. But it builds nothing. For that nothing but love will suffice.

And love gives us a criterion of judgment and a goal worth pursuing. Whitehead has told us that 'even Creation was the victory of persuasion over force.' And when the dreams of the dictators have been proved mistaken and forgotten, multitudes will still be affirming, *in hoc signo vinces*, and the sign will neither be swastika, fascisti nor hammer and sickle but the Cross—the emblem of selfless love.

And it enriches personal qualities and discovers fresh ones. When good people believe in us we have an urge to be better men which nothing else can give. Strength and persistence without bitterness—these are its fruits. 'With malice towards none, with charity for all'—was that the love of a weak man? It was that love that developed new powers in Abraham Lincoln, devoid of any outside influence or advantage and made him for ever great.

4. *But is it still valid in times like these?* I think it is. For in this love there is a place for moral indignation. We talk and sing of Gentle Jesus. Listen! 'Vipers! Serpents! Hypocrites!' Who used those words?

There is room in love for force and moral surgery. The Christian, to use Jung's word, is an extravert, one with an eye on the interests of others; one who works to an end, their end; and sin is what damages them, not us. Love cares too much to stop short at protest against the oppressor, the destroyer of all that makes life tolerable for humanity. There are times when protests are not enough. It was the love in Lincoln that made him say as he saw men bought and sold: 'If ever I get a chance I will hit this thing hard.'

But behind it all must be the spirit and attitude of love and inspiring it the thought of the goal ahead. In one of his lesser known works Augustine has a fine simile. He speaks of 'the glory of love . . . alive, but frostbound.' The root is alive, but the branches are almost dry. There is a heart of love within, and within are leaves and fruits; but they are waiting for a summer. Let us see to it that love is kept alive in us still; that it is recognized by us as the one constructive power we need; then, building afresh, on love we shall build finely, worthily and securely; for 'love never faileth.'

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Life in the Open

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE JOHNSTONE JEFFREY D.D., GLASGOW

'Walk as children of light.'—Eph 5^{8}.

Here, surely, is the Christian life at its fullest and best, our surrender to God without reserve, our obedience to Him, without question, our motives purged clean of self-thought, with nothing to hide, with nothing alluring us on which the holy eye of God may not rest, 'with love its own unerring light and joy its own security.' Is not this the ideal world we would fain make our home? Note that there is something here that is far above the mere categories of happiness or pain. At our best we may be citizens of this desirable world and yet know fierce temptation or burdensome sorrow, just as a life of outward success may conceal a deep, inward cancer.

He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun.

Scripture itself has many a signpost towards this land of light and liberty. Here are two of the most significant. The first lays down *the conditions* of entrance—'While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.' The second sets before us two of *its inestimable benefits*. 'If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

1. *The conditions of entrance.* Jesus is confronting a group of men faced with a great opportunity. The Light of the World shineth before them for their choice and acceptance and they suffer it to vanish from their sight. The same opportunity is ever before the sons of men. The light on life which Christ reveals to us is not something to be gazed at. It is something to be obeyed, to be believed in, to be followed instantly whithersoever it may lure us. By so doing, those who follow the light become the children of light. The instantaneous choice becomes habitual. Life in the open becomes our native air.

There are two implications of this thought which have vital consequences. No day passes over us but there come into our lives, swift, urgent commands of God, blessed leadings of His Spirit, illuminating assurances on the pathway of duty. And we can react to these Divine visitations in one of two ways. We can refuse the quick

obedience which conscience prompts till the light within dies out into darkness and a noble choice is for ever lost. Let it be frankly said that the natural man does not love the absolute categories of light and darkness. He lays the flattering unction to his soul that good and evil, light and darkness shade off into each other. One must not be narrow and puritanic.

Now all this evasion and shilly-shallying is utterly alien to Christ's Kingdom of light. If we refuse to bring our purposes out into the white light of the scrutiny of God, and make a practice of keeping them floating about in a dim chiaroscuro of compromise, life takes its sure revenge.

> For the lesson of the twilight
> Is as simple as 'tis deep.
> Acquiescence, acquiescence
> And the coming on of sleep.

No man may, with impunity, mock God with desperate prayers for succour in sore temptation unless he has cleared from his path every obstacle to complete victory. The whole point of the Jekyll and Hyde fable is that Jekyll *kept the clothes in which he could disguise himself and retained the hovel in which he could shelter when the devilish passion came on.* And just as a man who imagines he can, without peril, wander over the boundary that separates the Western zone from the Eastern in Berlin to-day, may suddenly find himself under deadly arrest, so in the realm of the Spirit do we court disaster by our moral neutrality. Therefore let us beware how we react to the first loud alarm of conscience. In the grave and deep words of Robertson of Brighton, 'In worldly matters "think twice" but in duty "first thoughts are best"—they are more pure, more fresh, have more of God in them.'

On the other hand, the converse truth is found, in experience, to hold good in every test and ordeal of the soul. 'While ye have the light,' when duty makes its first resounding appeal to conscience and will, follow the gleam instantaneously, unreservedly, wholeheartedly. It is by a long series of minute and absolute obediences that we become 'children of the light and the day.' 'He that walketh in darkness,' says our lord, 'knoweth not whither he goeth.' He stumbles through life without plan, without goal, without guide. But he that believes in the light, following it and obeying it, will come to know life in the open, a life that becomes with every year, its own proof, its own satisfaction, and its own exceeding great reward.

So much for the conditions of citizenship in the realm of light. We come to its blessings. 'If we walk in the light, . . . we have fellowship one with another.'

2. *The blessings of citizenship in the realm of light.* Needless to say, there can be no real co-operation between nations or men, where these hold two standards of right and wrong. It is part of the vast irony of our relations with Russia that she builds all her structure for the future on things shifty and dubious and tortuous. What a miracle might happen for the whole of humanity if that great Power would, for a day even, lay her plans and intentions honestly before the world. What applies to nations, applies also to individuals. It has been said that in war truth is always the first casualty. And, indeed, one shudders at the mountainous heights of falsehood and double-dealing that are thrown up by war. What might not happen if we Christians set our faces steadfastly towards recovering for God and humanity the lost empire of truth? In a Broadcast on Samuel Johnson the late Professor George Gordon had this to say: 'To "think Johnson" is, very simply, to have a habit of truth. It is, in all situations, to insist on the facts and face them when found.' 'All those who were of Johnson's school,' said Sir Joshua Reynolds, 'were distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy which they would not have possessed if they had not been acquainted with him.' If this be true of man, how abundantly true is it of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Only as we make it our daily habit to walk in the light of His presence shall falsehood and all manner of pretentiousness wither and wilt and die and we shall dwell in a realm where man can share life's richest blessings with his fellow-men. Can we Christians not pledge ourselves to a new, austere, Quaker-like *passion for the truth*? Let us make a beginning by going out into every new day in the spirit of Newman's searching hymn—

> Now that the day-star glimmers bright,
> We suppliantly pray
> That He, the uncreated Light,
> May guide us on our way.
>
> No sinful word, nor deed of wrong,
> Nor thoughts that idly rove;
> But simple truth be on our tongue,
> And in our hearts be love.

And last and best—'If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ his Son *cleanseth us from all sin.*'

Here is the comfort which answers to man's humiliating and perennial need. Who are we to use glowing language about walking in the light and eschewing the darkness when our daily lives are dimmed in their witness and robbed of their serenity because we often love the darkness better

than the light, and rush, with a low delight, back to the defeat we love better than victory?

O how shall I, whose native sphere
Is dark, whose mind is dim,
Before the Ineffable appear,
And on my naked spirit bear
The uncreated beam?

Thanks be to God the answer is with Him and not with us. 'If we walk in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' We do not enter here into the theological implications of these words. There have been many theories of the Atonement and will be. And, after all, why should we not welcome from any human quarter any light on that infinite mystery? But blessed be God *the mystery works*. Mighty things happen in life if we have eyes to see and hearts to learn from experience. Blind are we, with a culpable blindness, if we have not learned to look on our days as an *ever deepening purification*. All that happens to us comes within the range of that uplifting conception. Why does God give us our homes with their unspeakable joys and their sanctifying sorrows? Why do our friendships come to us, enriching us? Why does God send us in the ruck of common days thrilling surprises of joy, and the good news of success? To go deeper, why does He pass the choicest souls through a long gruelling struggle with the flesh? Why the frustrations and the blinding sorrows?

When we brood on all this we come to see the meaning of a deep, cryptic word of our Lord—*On that day ye shall ask no more questions*. As if He said to us, 'There is a day coming for you when all querulousness and back-speaking and stubbornness shall pass out of your nature and you will come to see that for the Christian, whatever else may be greatly dark one plain meaning emerges —"This is the will of God, even your sanctification"'—that while we men scheme and plan, a great purifying process is at work within us, the culmination of which will be a day coming when the love of Christ shall evict the hidden, inordinate inclination towards self, which dwells in every man, when we shall have our feet at last on the neck of the flesh, when humility and spirituality shall begin to become something more than the desire of the moth for the star, when we shall be children of the light and of the day and love shall be all in all. Shall we not be heavenly wise and give our hearts to the Purifier? And out of the life victorious we shall know of a truth that

There *is* a way for man to rise
To that sublime abode:
An offering and a sacrifice,
A Holy Spirit's energies,
An Advocate with God.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Evil at the Hand of God

BY THE REVEREND JOHN R. GRAY, B.D., GLASGOW

'What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'—Job 2[10].

Is evil an accident? Is it something alien to life? Clearly some of it is—the evil that is due to our own sin or that of others. Clearly also we have Christ's authority for the tremendous efforts that have been made and are being made for the removal of other evils like preventable disease and poverty. But when all has been done that can be done, is there not a residuum, a hard core of evil, which belongs to life as such? Legislation to abolish death and sorrow has yet to be devised. And there is something more.

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?

There is that in our dreams and ambitions which seems fated not to be realized, or, if realized, to cheat us of the expected joy. It is false to assume that all the ills the flesh is heir to must somehow be ironed out of life, leaving it a bland, smooth thing. It is an assumption at any rate with which Job profoundly disagrees; and, whatever be the truth of Job's life story, these words of our text clearly came from some one who had dipped deep into the depths of human experience, and brought forth wisdom. 'What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' Can evil ever be said to come from the hand of God? Has He given evil a part to play on the stage of life? Is there some soul of goodness in things evil would men observingly distil it out? Job thought there was.

1. Most obviously evil provides a necessary variety in life. An existence of unalloyed sweetness would be cloying and dull. There is something heroic in the soul of man that rebels against the soft life. When civilization forces it upon him he takes to mountaineering or some other dangerous sport to put back in life the bite and thrill which has been artificially squeezed out of it. Our palate rejects too sugary a diet. The salt, the bitter, and the sour are necessary for us. An analogy, too, may be found in the aesthetic field—in drama, art, and music. Drama could not exist without the dark principle, or a picture without shade or music of pure melody. If the analogy is sound all the arts seem to indicate the necessity of evil even if only for the sake of contrast.

2. Ah! yes, you say, but we could do with a good deal more of good in life and less of evil. We would be content with some other variety in

life than is provided by evils like pain and sickness and loss. And, yet, could we? It all depends on what the world is for. Is man's chief end to enjoy himself for ever? If so, there is no need for evil or any possibility that it comes from God? But if the world, as some one has said, is a vale of soul-making, evil is necessary. The human soul being what it is, it does not grow in sunshine alone. It needs the refreshing of tears, the cold winds of adversity. There is something cleansing in suffering which brings out the hero in the soul of man. Certainly those who stand out like giants in our history are not those who had soft and easy lives.

And is this not what we would expect? When a desire is satisfied the personality is not thereby enlarged. It is somehow weakened. Do you remember the story of David in the cave of Adullam? His mighty men at terrific risk to themselves passed through the enemy lines and brought him water from Jerusalem for which he had expressed a longing. When David received it he poured it on the ground. 'Of all the stupid waste!' some might say. But if David had drunk the precious fluid he would have shrunk in stature, and the world would have lost one of its noblest, its immortal stories. His own greatness of heart had to match that of those who had risked their lives to satisfy his whim. God Himself has set His seal on the statement that souls matter and finally only souls—not things or beauty or satisfaction or happiness. Christ did not endure His agonies that we might have these. He endured everything and the Cross that each soul of man might finally be brought to God. Compared with this nothing matters, and if for this to happen evil must be endured, then we should praise God for it as much as for the good, knowing that on the other side we shall bless the hand that guided and bless the heart that planned, when throned where glory dwelleth in Immanuel's land.

3. To help us to appreciate the good in this life; to prepare us for the good in the next. Yes, but there is something more, some deeper note in Job's heart cry. It could not be said that Job needed the evils that came upon him for variety, nor yet for the purifying of his soul. God describes him as a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil. Do you remember why Job's sufferings came upon him? They are part, as it were, of a cosmic experiment. God licensed the Devil to afflict Job in order to prove that it is possible for man to love God not for what He gives but for Himself alone. When Job was prosperous the Devil had jeered, 'Doth Job love God for nought?' And Job proved that he did. 'Though he slay me,' he cried, 'yet will I trust in him.' In his afflictions Job is fighting for the honour of God, for true against self-interested religion.

But—and here is the point—Job does not know it. He has not heard the dialogue in heaven. He knows not why he suffers—not as a punishment for sin, that he knew—but why? That why throbs painfully and insistently throughout his whole book, and is never answered to Job. Only the reader is let into the secret. All that Job knew was that all that was sent by God was somehow sent in mercy. He would not curse God and die. Through pain and sorrow and bewilderment Job held on to God, determined not to let Him go. There is a story of an old Highland woman whose husband had been killed. Her minister astonished at her calm, commented on it. She said, 'Should I not receive the cup prepared for me by a Father's hands before the world began?' What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?

This is a grown-up, manly statement. Once we can say this—and mean it—we have reached spiritual maturity. But how many of us can? How many of us spend our time fretting at the circumstances of our lives! 'I didn't deserve this.' 'I don't see why this should happen to me.' When things go wrong we whimper and sulk and fling away from life and God, crying that it isn't fair that this evil should come upon us and this good be denied. We assume that it is the job of the world and other people and God to make sure that no distress threatens the even tenor of our ways, that no whim of ours goes unsatisfied. That is an infantile assumption. The first step in growing up is to realize that evil has its place in life, and to accept it, to let the hand of God shape life, knowing that it cannot be forced into our preconceived patterns. To learn contentment and detachment from things: to do as things will do with you and still give thanks: this is the secret of true life, and certainly the secret of our holy faith. To believe that there is beauty and meaning, though hidden from our eyes, in pain and sorrow and denial; to take the rough with the smooth; to be ready for misfortune and disaster and to remain tranquil and serene, not fussed or fretted or impatient when life seems untidy or stubborn. To accept life as it is; this is the way of true godliness. 'What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?' It is not God's duty to make our path smooth or pleasant for us. He did not avoid the hard and stony road Himself.

Once upon a time cruel men jibed and weak men hoped as they looked at the Saviour on the Cross. Would He, could He come down and make a happy ending after all? But God's

happy endings are not ours. What if Christ had come down from the Cross and the whole gallant, wondrous story had ended tamely and lamely? Would the gospel then have shocked and challenged and ennobled men as it has done all down through the ages? Has it not done that for us and strangely comforted us, too, just because there is a Cross at the heart of it as there is at the heart of life? Is it not that very Cross that enables us to endure our own fiery trial, our own sorrow and pain, to endure it and give thanks for it? For as we face the Cross and know that it was for us The Christ endured its agony; know that God has not spared His only Son but delivered Him up for us all, has writ our redemption in His own heart's blood: as we know that freely and undeservedly this greatest of all goods is ours from the hand of God; we can say with Job but with a fullness of meaning Job never knew—'What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?'

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

Answer to Anarchy

BY THE REVEREND D. H. C. READ, M.A., B.D., EDINBURGH

'In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'—Jg 21^{25}.

It is said that once in the days of Queen Victoria after a violent and moving presentation of Shakespeare's *Othello*, when the curtain had finally come down on a stage littered with corpses, one lady in the audience turned to her neighbour and remarked: 'Dear me! How unlike the home life of our dear Queen.'

It is something in the same spirit that the editor of the Book of Judges closes his account of this early and blood-stained period of his nation's history. He has put together the traditional tales that had come down from the days when the Hebrews first came into the land of Palestine, the tales of the heroes—a better name than Judges—during a period of violence and tribal feud. Then at the end, rather like a modern Scottish historian apologizing for the barbaric days of inter-clan warfare and general lawlessness, he puts as a postscript to his Book: 'In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.'

Now it is worth noting that the Bible sets this down as a period in national history that had to be outgrown. Later books in the Old Testament are full of the rules and regulations by which order and authority were imposed on the anarchy of individuals and tribes. Instead of the chance and temporary rule of judges and heroes who seized power from time to time, a central monarchy was developed under Saul and David that welded the tribes into a disciplined nation. This development is seen to be inevitable, although it is not assumed that people will find it to their taste. In the remarkable passage where we find the people demanding that they should have a king, Samuel warns them of the consequences of royal government. He will conscript your sons in his army, he says, he will conscript your daughters as cooks and bakers—and, worst of all, he will impose taxes. It is almost as if the Bible were saying to us: you must have government as you cannot live in anarchy, but government will almost certainly be unpleasant.

It is not surprising then that from time to time in the human story men have hankered after the days of the Judges when 'every man did that which was right in his own eyes.' There is a great appeal, especially to-day, in the thought of a society that has dispensed with all the paraphernalia of government and gets along simply by every one doing what is right in his own eyes.

This appeal comes to us to-day from the extremes of the Right and the Left. In the Communist State which has not yet been reached in any country of the world there is to be no need of an army or police force or any central compulsion. Every one will do that which is right in his own eyes, but, since each will be a good Communist, each will give according to his ability and will receive according to his need. There is to be 'no king in Israel' no dictator, no Politbureau, no Secret Police—these things, we are told, are temporary phases on the way to the perfect society.

At the opposite pole a similar cry goes up from the *laissez-faire* capitalist. Away with controls and restrictions and let 'every man do what is right in his own eyes.' That is private enterprise, unhampered by regulations. The theory here is that if every man is free to win the maximum profit out of society, society itself will benefit.

Well, what is wrong with either of these theories? I think most of us would just look around at history and the present scene and say: 'Well, it just doesn't work out that way.' We see countries that have accepted Communist leadership progressing not towards a happy free society where there is less and less direction of individual lives, but to an ever more rigid discipline, a fantastically strict Party line, a merciless and brutal dragooning of thought and action, till there is scarcely any area at all in which a man can do 'that which is right in his eyes.'

Again, when we look at the history of Capitalism we see that the demand for freedom of action,

unrestricted ability to 'do that which is right in our own eyes,' has meant the withdrawal of these rights from millions of others. Every country that has gone through the period of capitalist development has, in fact, recognized that control of some sort is necessary on the claim of individuals to do what is right in their own eyes.

We are driven to the conclusion that what looks like the freest kind of human society is in fact a recipe for bondage of the worst kind. Anarchy, when each does what is right in his own eyes, means a condition of chaos and strife in which all our true liberty disappears. I have twice experienced for a brief moment something like anarchy in human affairs: once, soon after I was captured in 1940, and again soon after I was liberated. I can assure you that a situation when each is out for himself, especially when prompted by hunger, is not an enviable one; and in each case we were glad to exchange anarchy for discipline—even for the discipline of an enemy.

It looks, then, as though the editor of the Book of Judges was making a wise historical judgment when he added his footnote to explain the turbulence and violence of the stories in his Book. The Bible is much more realistic than the political theories that have often attracted mankind. It teaches throughout one simple truth that we have often forgotten—that man is a sinner, and therefore unfit to be trusted simply to do 'that which is right in his own eyes.' To be a sinner means simply setting up oneself as a god, serving and worshipping oneself. If that is our natural tendency then clearly when each does what is right in his own eyes there will be clash, conflict, and confusion.

We are living in a period when this clash of interest is terribly plain. We can no longer believe that all will be well if every man follows his own conscience. It would be if that conscience was trained to respond to the highest good, if every man and woman was in tune with God. But we have to face the melancholy fact that with perfect sincerity men and women can go desperately wrong. The more we consider the position of the country to-day the greater appears the damage done to the community by individuals and groups doing what is right in their own eyes. What then is the answer?

There is one answer that is looming on the horizon. It has already been given in our lifetime—in Italy, in Germany, and in Russia. It is to increase the power of the State. It was precisely because in Italy and Germany during the 'twenties and 'thirties chaos came through each one and each group doing what was right in their own eyes that these nations turned to Fascism and Nazism. I can remember the remarks of ordinary well-meaning Germans when Hitler came to power. They had no sense of being crushed into a dictatorship: they felt that at last an authority had arisen to bring order out of the anarchy of their national life. That is how these things happen. I believe there are more people thinking, perhaps unconsciously, along these lines than is healthy in our country at the moment. Every one is out for himself, men say—right, then let the State exercise its authority, let people be disciplined, let them be made to conform for the common good.

We have seen the futility of this method of overcoming the problem. For the inevitable end of Totalitarianism is that instead of individuals, we have dictators, and gangs in power, and nations doing what is right in their own eyes. And the result is the same—strife, war, bloodshed on an international scale. It is necessary that there should be 'a king in Israel'—some form of national authority to restrain the individual and group in the common interest; and some form of international authority to restrain the selfishness of nations; but the danger remains that the State can also act as a selfish tyrant, and (what idealist crusaders for world-government often forget) the super-state a super-tyrant.

There is only one way out for mankind. There is only one true safeguard of human liberty; only one valid check upon the selfishness of individuals, groups, or nations. And that is the recognition of one supreme standard by which all our rights are judged, one certain judge of all men and nations, one King who is above the 'king of Israel.' 'The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' Our business is first to seek Him and to do what is right in *His* sight.

Here in the Bible is the whole story we are living through—discord, fighting, uncertainty, arrogance, fears, aspirations, hopes. But through it all comes the Word of God. This is My world, He says—'every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.' 'All souls are mine,' saith the Lord. 'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' The Bible brings us the only final answer to the anarchy of the human spirit—the living God whose service is perfect freedom.

What is needed at the moment is not so much the assertion of these truths from the pulpit as the witness of people who will live as if they meant something. As Christians we know that there is a standard of right and wrong. We know more—we know that that standard became flesh and blood, and that in Christ we are given both the example and the power for doing what is right in

God's sight. Then we must ruthlessly apply that standard to our personal lives, seeking above all God's grace to do not what is right in our own eyes, or in the eyes of our friends, or our social class, or our political party, or our nation, but right in the sight of God. It is only His love that can conquer the anarchy of our own hearts, and only His authority that can bring peace to a troubled world.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

The Lifted Life

BY THE REVEREND R. LEONARD SMALL, M.A., CRAMOND

'Thine answers to prayer have raised me.'—Ps 18^{35} (Moffatt).

One of the difficulties confronting us in this generation, when so many have lost the art of praying, yet are wistfully conscious of their need of that power which true prayer has always brought to life, is that *we tend to limit both the field and the function of prayer*. We are inclined to pray only about certain of our needs, perhaps those we regard as 'religious' or 'spiritual,' and leave whole areas of living, which include many of our most real interests, untouched by the spirit of prayer. Even then we are apt to pray only in an emergency, when all else has failed. It is very tempting, too, to regard prayer as merely a heaven-sent means of getting what we want from God, a providential 'chimney' up which to direct our demands, much as children before Christmas post their requests to Santa Claus. We then proceed to judge the value of prayer by the accuracy and rapidity with which such boons are granted. Praying means, most certainly, much more than that, and these words of the Psalmist, so challengingly translated by Dr. Moffatt, suggest an aspect of prayer which is badly needing to be re-discovered. Prayer lifts life to a new level. 'Who rises from prayer a better man, the same is answered.' The best answer to true prayer is a lifted life, and it is an answer that never fails to be given.

Real prayer brings a new dimension into life. Dr. Emil Brunner of Zürich once used this idea of a new dimension with telling effect. He pictured to his students a man pursued by his enemies, turning down a narrow lane to escape and finding it blocked by a high wall at the end, and on either side. If that man can think only in two dimensions, forward or back, to right or left, then he must be caught. But if he can think in a third dimension, upward, then he may clamber over the wall and get away. To bring God into any situation is to introduce such an extra dimension. 'When I was hemmed in Thou hast freed me often,' so runs another modern translation in the Psalms. All of us know, only too well, that hemmed-in feeling. The common nightmare of finding oneself in a room whose walls and roof are closing in and crushing us is a symbol of an often terrifying reality. Life has a knack of pressing in upon us till we feel smothered and trapped, and grow either panicky or resigned. Many of us are hemmed in by an ever-increasing accumulation of little burdens, or worries or annoyances, like the flakes of snow, harmless in themselves, which packed together form an avalanche that can overwhelm a whole village. Circumstances, like so many implacable foes, stand grimly round us, slowly closing in with no gap anywhere in the cordon. Our sins, minimize them as we will, still beset us and ring us round. What a horrible experience it must be to be 'shadowed,' to be followed everywhere and never left alone! One modern novelist has described how he became conscious of a figure dogging his footsteps, and try as he would he could not shake him off, twist and turn as he might the 'shadow' was always there. At last he could bear it no longer and determined to come to grips with his persistent follower. He quickened his pace, changed to a run, turned a corner, suddenly doubled back on his tracks and gripped at last the man who followed hard on his heels. His 'shadow' was himself! Every one of us is shadowed by himself, and there is the very centre of the problem of how to escape when hemmed in, how to breathe when crushed and stifled.

Perhaps the experience of men who faced that situation literally in P.O.W. camps may suggest an answer. David Philpot, in his book, *Stolen Journey*, describes some of the attempts men made to break out from Stalag Luft III. One was fascinatingly simple in conception and daring in execution. During digging operations in connexion with drains the Germans left a large hole conveniently open in the compound. Three prisoners seized their chance and getting down into the hole at dusk proceeded to dig one after the other towards the wire a small tunnel just under the surface, closing it up behind them as they went. Daylight found them not yet clear of the wire and they were in that tiny mole hole till dark came again, and, finally, after thirty-three hours underground, broke out and got away. When they told their story after recapture they were immediately asked how they managed to breathe. They replied that they carried a stick which they poked up through the surface at an angle, so that they not only managed to breathe but were able to see the tops of the pine trees against the sky and so keep their direction. Real prayer is like that 'moler,' when a man is hemmed

in it enables him to break out into a new dimension, when he is stifled it breaks through to the clean air of a world outside, when he seems to be groping in the dark for a way out it gives him a viewpoint on the sky and a sense of direction.

Real prayer brings a new reality into life by realizing the presence and the power of God. That word 'reality' can have a cold implacable look about it, suggesting as it does the inescapable in life, the facts which still are 'chiels that winna ding.' One of the great problems of our religious life is the utter unreality for many people of the things that are unseen and eternal over against the grim reality of the things that are seen and temporal. Unseen resources are not nearly as real to most of us as actual burdens and difficulties. We are caught here in a vicious circle, for we make excuses for not praying because God is not real to us, whereas the main reason why God is not real to us is that we do not pray.

Nothing is real to us but that with which we habitually deal. All of us have friends who once meant everything to us, but years ago they went off to Australia or New Zealand. To begin with we wrote regularly, and kept in touch, but the years passed, and the letters stopped, because our lives lay so far apart, and now we would admit with shame we do not know where they are, we do not even know whether they are alive or dead —they have become quite unreal. On the other hand, one knows a mother, seven of whose family of ten have settled overseas, married, and driven their roots deep in the new land. Every day she writes to one or other of them, and every week the seven letters from abroad come winging back like homing pigeons. She has a dozen grandchildren, none of whom she has ever seen, except in snapshots at the various stages, yet if one of these children were landed on her doorstep and left to ring the bell she would recognize him at once, for, though far apart, she is constantly in touch and they are all wonderfully real to her.

True prayer reaches out, keeps us in touch, makes God real like that. But it does more, for it lays hold on the reality of God. When a rock climber is tackling a particularly steep face he may use little spikes called 'pitons' which he drives hard home into a crack in the rock. Through the eye in the end of the 'piton' he passes a split link and through the link he will reeve his climbing rope, and so climb up step by step to the top. The 'piton' is not a lift, he still has to make his own effort and do his own climbing, but he climbs with a new sense of security and an added freedom of movement because he has taken a firm grip of the rock. Prayers can be like 'pitons,' laying hold of the reality of God. And that reality, once laid hold on, can provide a new purchase in life. Opposite the mouth of one of our East Coast harbours, now used only by a few fishing boats, lies buried in the sand a huge old anchor. In the old days of the coasting schooners a chain and buoy were attached to the anchor, and a long rope would be carried from the ship's bows, there in harbour, out through a block on the buoy and back to the capstan. Then they warped her out against the wind, by dint of the purchase thus obtained. Real prayer gives men a new purchase on the power of God.

Real prayer relates life responsively to the loving purpose of God. If God is truly our Father, then when we pray we are never merely trying to attract His attention, or to persuade Him to take an interest in us. We are not seeking to wheedle or browbeat Him into doing what we want. We are relating our lives responsively to His purpose, so that He may do in us, and through us, and for us, what *He* wants. A much-neglected part of prayer is the kind of thanksgiving which looks at life as we have experienced it, realizes how often and unmistakably God's good hand has been upon us, and so comes to recognize how good is God's purpose for us, and how perfectly to be trusted. We should all do well, every now and then, to 'think and thank.'

There is much need for the kind of prayer which will tune us in to God. The handling of large crowds has recently been simplified by policemen using 'walkie-talkie' sets which make it possible to report on conditions in each part of a great sports arena, and receive orders and instructions from a central control point. Praying can do exactly that, but the trouble is that too much of our praying has no switch marked 'receive,' there is no 'over to you' about it. Many a situation which looks hopeless to us would be quite different if we would 'spread it before the Lord' as Hezekiah did with the Assyrian ultimatum, set it in the light of God, and then listen for what He may have to say to us. Perhaps the most fascinating incident in the story of the Kon-Tiki Expedition is the description of how on that raft drifting across the Pacific they got the wireless to work, and so were linked up with the distant mainland, thereafter sending and receiving messages, news, advice, and instructions, even making contact with the homeland, Norway, and sending birthday greetings to their King. All that was made possible by an apparatus with the strength of a small electric torch! The best prayers we can muster do seem to us at times very frail and faint, yet they can reach out and link our little world, our changing purposes, to the great and loving purpose of Him whose answers to prayer still raise us.

Church Under Fire[1]

By Professor John Foster, D.D., Glasgow

I heard some one say, 'There are more Christians suffering persecution and martyrdom in our generation than in the first three centuries put together—the centuries usually counted as the heroic age of the Church.' I do not know the numbers. But any one who reads the newspapers must know that persecution has reared its ugly head in half the world.

Let us try to understand. The chief reason why Christians have got into trouble, whether in the Early Church or now, is this: There are so many things from which Christians have to separate themselves. If you are separate, people think you are queer, dislike you. In a crisis, they may suspect you. In some kinds of political set-up they will regard you as a danger and treat you accordingly.

Seventeen, eighteen, nineteen hundred years ago, in the lands around the Mediterranean, there were certain religious duties which a man just took for granted as belonging to daily life. Born into this family, why of course you worship the family ancestors and your household gods. It is these which guard the family fortunes. A citizen of this city, it must be to your interest that the city's guardian god, or goddess, should protect. And so on certain festivals there will be dues to this temple or that. And the greatest of the cities, Rome, now capital of an empire: there are mysterious powers (differently thought about but associated with the person of the Emperor) upon which the existence of government, the Roman peace, and civilization itself, depend. The ancient world had no idea of a society—family, city, or empire—which was not backed by mysterious powers. These community religions were not a thing that folk got excited about, or believed in very intensely. Seneca, who was contemporary with Jesus Christ, said, 'A wise man will observe these customs of religion as things which the law requires, rather than as things which please the gods.'

That may sound cynical, but of course that was not the whole story of religion in the Roman Empire. Besides the religious customs into which a man was born, the religious backing of the whole of society, there were religious societies. You were not born a member. Far from it. You heard about one particular religion, maybe gossip from a neighbour who had got interested. Perhaps you saw a strange figure of a man talking to a group in the market-place, and you went up to listen. Or you got an address, and in the back room of a house—after some one had looked carefully around to see that no suspicious stranger was present—they told you a bit more about its teaching. Then you had your name put down as interested. Soon you were in a group preparing for initiation. After training and testing, the day came, and you were made a member. Not born-so religion—you were born again, member of a new society, come into relationship with a new and powerful god.

There were lots of such societies, different from each other in the name of the god, the teaching about him, the requirements for membership, but religious societies. Government? Well, the Roman Empire was tolerant about religion, as an enlightened state should be. It did not like societies, especially secret ones. We have one letter from a zealous official, about A.D. 110, telling the Emperor that in his city, Nicomedeia, they are always having fires, and so he asks permission to organize an auxiliary fire service. And the Emperor writes back, 'No. Give them the buckets, but don't organize them. Whatever name they bear it is certain they will become a political club.' No societies. Yet of these religious societies there was only one which came into head-on collision with Government. The other societies were things that you added on to life as it had been. With regard to the gods of the family, the city, the state, you kept up appearances, even if your enthusiasms were elsewhere. This one religious society had an inconvenient commandment, 'Thou shalt have none other gods but Me.' Become a Christian, and you have finished with the altar at home. You have finished with the temples in the city. You have finished with the gods of the Empire.

You may say, What of the Jew? For the Jew had this commandment before the Christian. The Roman Government looked at the Jew with his finicky monotheism, and, oh! yes, they despised him. 'But,' they said, 'he was like that, poor fellow, before we came along and took him into the Empire. We don't understand his scruples, but we are an enlightened and tolerant people. Let him be.' Christians are not a born-so religion. This society is joined by people of every nationality, from every sort of community—and where are their community duties then? A second century writer puts it like this, 'The Jews ought not to be blamed, for every man ought to live according

[1] Broadcast in the Home Service of the B.B.C., 6th February 1951.

to the customs of his ancestors. But Christians have forsaken their national customs for the law of Christ.'

Of course most Christians were not bad neighbours; few were disloyal subjects; they were further still from conspiracy against the state. But they were different, and so, easily misunderstood. Most of them were ordinary working folk—slaves. There were no church buildings. They met in houses. There was no Sunday rest, so they held their meetings at night, when the day's work was done. 'Ho!' says some one, 'nightly meetings! I wonder what goes on there?' 'Haven't you heard? They have one meeting called a Love Feast!' Love! To the heathen mind, that is another name for lust. Stories of nightly meetings with sexual orgies were passed around. Another meeting with a meal they heard of, and the words were spoken 'This is my body,' 'This is my blood.' A story wilder still was whispered—they murder a baby and hold a cannibal feast. So sometimes you find a magistrate torturing a Christian prisoner by the hour, trying to wring a confession from his twisted body. And each time he stops the torture and says, 'Confess!' the answer comes, 'We do nothing vile.'

Of course they were not hounded to death all the time. But you never knew when it might come, the mob setting upon you because of stories they had heard; a zealous official having you arrested because you were not patriotic and did not pay the respect of worship to the Emperor. Here is an account, written at the time, seventeen hundred years ago, of such an arrest and trial:

'The Judge took his seat, and asked, "What is your name?" "Pionius." "Will you sacrifice?" "No." "What form of worship do you belong to?" "That of the Christians." "Are you their teacher?" "Yes, I used to teach." "Were you a teacher of folly?" "Of religion, sir." "Religion indeed! What sort?" "The religion of God the Father who made all things. . . ." "Well, sacrifice." "No." "Come, come, we all worship gods of some sort, and heaven." Then Pionius was silent. So they strung him up. Then said the warders, "Sacrifice." "No." They tortured him with the iron claw, and said, "Change your mind! What madness is this?" "It is not madness. It is fear of the living God." The Judge then intervened. "Many others have sacrificed, and they are alive and in their right minds." "I cannot." "But now that you have been cross-questioned, just think about it to yourself a moment, and change your mind." "Not I, sir." Then one of the bystanders called out. "Why are you so bent upon death?" "Not upon death—upon life!"'

That scene comes from the worst persecution there had yet been, in the year 250. This time it was not just the chance action of a mob or the zeal of a local official. Persecution was organized on an imperial scale, commanded to be carried out everywhere. No more about eating babies and sexual offences. Christians are now too well known for that. The complaint that Christians are separate, remains; indeed they call the Christians now—what is the phrase?—'a state within the state.' Right through the Empire their organization goes—they have spread to every province, and beyond. They have leaders who settle their own disputes without need of a magistrate; who give instructions and are used to being obeyed. They have charities which help not only their own unfortunates but others besides. If a Christian travels he carries letters of introduction—in a distant place he will soon be among friends. 'A state within the state.' And if it ever came to a choice of loyalties. . . . Well, there ought to be no such competitor. The state should be the ultimate. Should it? Should it? We may well ask again to-day.

That was why in the year 250 there began a serious attempt to stamp out the Church throughout the Empire. If you were accused of being a Christian, the thing to do was to get an identity card—then you would escape further trouble. One such card has come down to us, so we know what they were like. 'I So-and-so, aged so old, son of Such-and-Such. Address, Whatsitsname village. Identification, scar over right eyebrow. I have sacrificed to the gods in your presence, and have eaten of the sacrificial meal. Signed, So-and-so. Countersigned, Somebody-else, as witness. Stamped by the official for the oversight of sacrifices.' If not, it was prison, and torture,—and death for the leaders. Besides these like Pionius who were faithful unto death, there were many who could not stand it, and gave in. Do not be hard on them till you have heard this, an actual voice from that very time: 'My mind stood firm. My faith was strong. My soul struggled long, unshaken by the torturing pains. But when, wearied out as I was, the whip was now tearing me, the clubs bruised me, the rack stretched me, the iron claw dug into me, the fire roasted me—my flesh failed me in the fight, the weakness of my body gave way.' As we think of some whom modern torture has robbed not only of bodily resistance but of their right mind, we are silent before a darkness which can be felt.

From the same welter of suffering about the year 250 we must listen to another voice. Think of it next time you hear sung that hymn which is called *Te Deum Laudamus*. It was from the midst of this persecution that words which later

were to become one verse of it, came together, written by Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage,

> The glorious company of the apostles,
> The goodly fellowship of the prophets,
> The noble army of martyrs, praise Thee.

From the midst of persecution comes the sound of triumph.

There were other attempts at suppression on an empire-wide scale towards the end of the third century, and just at the beginning of the fourth, worst of all in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt. When they found that death was claiming too many, instead of taking a man's life they began to gouge out one eye, and then send him to work in the mines, cutting a tendon in one leg as well, lest he should run away. Yes, concentration camps. When I first read Church History we used to assume that such barbarities had long passed, with the passing of the old paganism. What of the sound of triumph ?

Its final sound comes from a strange quarter, a proclamation by the Emperor Galerius, who had the worst of records as a persecutor. The year is 311. Listen to this, his edict of toleration : ' It has been our aim that Christians, who had abandoned the religion of their forefathers, should return to right opinions. Nevertheless, because great numbers still persist, we, from our wonted clemency have judged it fit to bestow indulgence on these, and to permit them again to be Christians, and to establish their religious meetings.' Galerius was ill, dying, and he seems to have been in fear of death and of hell. So he added another sentence : ' Wherefore it will be the duty of the Christians, in consequence of this our toleration, to pray to God for our welfare, and for that of the public, and for their own.' So passed the last of the old persecutors. So passed the old paganism. The Christians had outlived it.

Contributions and Comments

Theological Issues Involved in Baptism

Of course I have no desire to ' justify the Church's adherence to a rite of admission which possesses neither ethical conditions nor ethical significance.' I did, however, hope and even think that my article (The Expository Times for April, 1950) said something to show that advocates of Infant Baptism held no such view of this sacrament, and I am a little disappointed that Mr. White repeats (January, 1951) the charge *simpliciter*.

Mr. White judges one of the points made against him ' less than fair.' I hasten to offer profound apology for any unfairness, and if others share his view to retract what was said. At the same time, one imagines that judgment in a case of four points is legitimately influenced by his view of the one put forward as primary. If the argument concerned the genuineness of two shillings and sixpence made up of four coins, and one of the coins, a florin, were proved to be counterfeit, one may be pardoned for assuming, without much argument, that the residue did not add up to much. Unless Mr. White's ' primarily ' was intended in some quite unusual sense, I cannot even now see how his view can survive the charge of meagreness.

For the rest, is it very obtuse of me simply to press the four points made in the previous article ? I confess myself unsatisfied that Mr. White has done much to answer them.

(1) I cannot, I think, really blame myself for his apparent misunderstanding about Infant Baptism and Believers' Baptism being not exclusive alternatives. A Church which administers Infant Baptism may of course administer also Adult Baptism in cases where the conditions requisite to Infant Baptism have not been earlier fulfilled. I do not think I left the position obscure for any one willing to understand.

(2) I must again affirm, though with diminishing hopes of making the point clear to Mr. White, that he cannot himself be more eager to be faithful to the exposition of Holy Scripture than are at least many of the advocates of Infant Baptism. It is difficult to see how any one conversant with the literature of the subject can charge them (or me) with ' deliberately discounting ' New Testament example, ' adopting opposite practices,' ' uncontrolled by Scripture.' All this amounts to is that these advocates have come to conclusions concerning the New Testament witness different from those with which Mr. White works, and from them for some reason he dissents. In fact, the New Testament is not a case book of precedents to which immediate reference may be made, but rather a source book of doctrine (as Cullmann in his *Tauflehre* suggests); and Baptism is so doctrinally defined in the New Testament that its eventual administration to infants in the early days of the Church is inevitable.

(3) I always realized, and in fact in my article allowed, that, as Mr. White now alleges, prevenient grace is frequently emphasized in Baptist

groups. On the other hand, Mr. White does not justly represent the Baptist case (as pointed out before). For example, his earlier categorical statement that 'grace is God's action in a soul made voluntarily susceptible to Divine influence by personal repentance and faith' would certainly have to be modified to allow prevenience to grace, and it was his article with which I found it so difficult to be satisfied, not the views of Baptists in general with whom I should have to disagree at other points.

(4) No one is here suggesting that the grace of God is so tied to Baptism that it cannot work independently of it. What is affirmed is that Baptism is the covenanted sign and seal of God's grace. We are, therefore, authorized and required to apply this means of grace in infancy to those who belong to the 'household of faith,' since it is appointed for them. I fear I am incompetent to pass judgment on the conclusions Mr. White draws from the hypothetical premise that 'persons can *receive* grace (as distinct from being the objects of God's gracious wooing) without being spiritually conditioned by faith in the gospel to receive it,' because (so far as it is possible to understand it) I certainly do not accept the premise.

By all means let us hope for a more positive statement of the issues from the paedobaptist standpoint. One or two people were kind enough to say that an article in the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, iii. 2 did something to supply this need for them.

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Let the Dead Bury Their Dead

It is interesting to compare the frame of this saying as given in our two Gospels. A recent comment in these columns took the Matthaean frame for granted, noting that the person concerned was already a disciple. In this case the incident would be, as it were, a request for temporary leave of absence from following because of news from home, perhaps that the father was actually lying dead at home. But the word 'first' in 'Let me *first* go . . .' and the nature of Jesus' clear 'Follow me' even in the Matthaean record of the reply support the Lucan frame. This suggests that the man was not a disciple in the full sense but received now his initial call, and the man wished to postpone obedience in order to care for his old father in his old age.

We err if we take Jesus' epigrammatic sayings too literally. The reply here catches up a word from the man's mouth, and out of his own mouth dismisses the excuse. Jesus sometimes, as it were, by a trick of phrase suggests that what has been asked Him is irrelevant; and the phrase is, taken literally, meaningless; its very meaninglessness exposes the irrelevance of the question or statement that evokes it. We might in colloquial speech rephrase the answer. 'Let the dead take care of themselves.'

The Form critics have warned us that the frames of the sayings are not integral to the original tradition. Perhaps we may do again in our own psychologically minded age what the tradition-makers did in theirs, and with the plain saying reconstruct the frame anew. Then the incident would read something like this. Jesus notes among His hearers a likely recruit for the work of the Kingdom, and selects him to be a follower. In the man's mind is an inner struggle —he would like to follow, but who is to maintain his father in his old age? He replies, 'Yes—but. . . .' Jesus, who at another time had said that following Him might mean hating one's father, feels that the issue is a challenge of trust and obedience, and replies, 'Bury? You talk of burying! No, let the dead look after themselves. Your job is not with dead things but with the preaching of the Gospel of Life.'

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Entre Nous

Help for the Preacher

We wish to say without qualification that *The Preparation of Sermons*, by Professor Arthur W. Blackwood (Church Book Room Press; 15s.), is quite the best and most helpful book on preaching that we have ever seen. Dr. Blackwood has been Professor of Homiletics in Princeton Theological Seminary since 1930. He himself considers that this is the most important book that he has written. It was first published in America in 1948 and a very real debt of gratitude is due to those who have arranged for its publication in this country at what is, in these days, so reasonable a price.

Dr. Blackwood has made a life study of the sermons of the great preachers. The book is well indexed and in it there appear no fewer than two hundred and twenty-seven names. Lest it should be thought that this book deals mainly with

preaching in America it should be pointed out that it contains thirteen references to Spurgeon, eight to Thomas Chalmers and to J. S. Stewart, seven to F. W. Robertson, six to W. M. Clow, five to Leslie Weatherhead and A. J. Gossip, four to James Denney, George Matheson and J. H. Newman, three to H. H. Farmer, two to G. H. Morrison, Campbell Morgan, P. T. Forsyth, John Kelman and John Oman, and single references to British preachers too numerous to mention. One curious and amazing omission is that there is not a single reference to W. M. Macgregor who surely should have been included in that goodly company.

The book is intensely practical. There are twenty-four chapters which deal in detail with every conceivable aspect of composing, writing, and delivering sermons. The book abounds in wise counsels—'Men want ethical teaching to come from a friend with a large heart, and not from a critic with a big stick.' 'The preacher should lay down one rule with never an exception (for writing his sermons), "Start, continue and end with prayer."' 'The man without a goal seldom gets anywhere.' 'Laymen frequently stand nonplussed at the close of a sermon, not knowing what they ought to think or what they ought to do.' 'A sermon ought to answer the unspoken question of the hearer, "In the light of this message what does the Lord wish me to do?"' 'In expository preaching put the emphasis on preaching, and not on exposition. Go into the pulpit each time to meet a human need, and not to explain a passage.' 'Three-fourths of preaching well consists in giving definite, well-chosen facts, and plenty of them. The other fourth doesn't matter.' 'Between what we do and what we are capable of doing there is a difference of one hundred per cent.' In treating of the danger of sensational titles Dr. Blackwood quotes the following gems. A young minister (who afterwards not surprisingly quitted the ministry) preached on 'The Sex Life of Samson.' An older man preached on 'A Night with the Witch of Endor.' Another preacher entitled a sermon on John the Baptist 'The Man who lost his Head at a Dance.' William Magee's dictum is quoted, 'There are three kinds of preachers; the one to whom you cannot listen; the one to whom you can listen; and the one to whom you must listen.' 'No sermon is ready for preaching, not ready for writing out, until we can express its theme in a short, pregnant sentence as clear as crystal' (J. H. Jowett). 'Ideally a man starts with interest and ends with force.' Dr. Blackwood forbids depressing preaching. 'Open up a vista of hope even for the weakest and the worst of men, lest any one begin to feel about the sanctuary, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here."' He would allow humour at the beginning or the middle of a sermon but not near the close, and quotes Niebuhr on this matter. 'There may be laughter in the vestibule of the Temple, and the echo of laughter in the Temple itself, but only faith and prayer and no laughter in the holy of holies.'

In the course of this book Dr. Blackwood quotes no fewer than a hundred and forty passages from Scripture and he quotes none that he does not illumine. To take but two examples—he partitions Ps 121 thus: 'The God of the waiting hills, the God of the sleepless watch, the God of the friendly shade, the God of the winding road.' And he divides the early verses of Is 6 thus: 'A young man's vision of God, a young man's vision of sin, a young man's vision of cleansing, a young man's vision of service.' It is not without significance that one of the closing chapters is on the sin of unacknowledged borrowing and plagiarism!

Every chapter has appended to it a most useful bibliography for further study. Even remembering the glory of the Warrack Lectures we repeat that we know of no book so *practically* useful for the maker of sermons.

WILLIAM BARCLAY

An International Society for the Study of the New Testament

The *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas*, which was inaugurated just before the last war, but was unable to hold regular annual meetings until recently, has published in a *Bulletin* of sixty-two pages, intended primarily for members of the society, the four papers read at its last general meeting in September 1950, at Oxford, together with an account of the Society's origins and some other notes. The papers are 'Mediation in the Fourth Gospel,' by Professor H. Clavier (Strasbourg), 'Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament,' by Professor J. Munck (Aarhus), 'The Persecutions in 1 Peter,' by Dr. E. G. Selwyn (Winchester), and 'The New Testament Peshitta and its Predecessors,' by Dr. M. Black (Leeds). Some copies of the *Bulletin* are still available, and as long as they last, the editor, Professor R. H. Lightfoot, 38 Norham Gardens, Oxford, will send one, post free, to any applicant, on receipt of a postal order for 5s.

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